



## AGENDA

**MEETING:** Regular Meeting  
**TIME:** Wednesday, August 5, 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** – Special Meeting of July 8, 2015  
Regular Meeting of July 15, 2015

### **D. Discussion Items**

#### **1. Work-Live/Live-Work Code Amendments**

Review oral testimony received at the July 15<sup>th</sup> public hearing and written comments received through July 22<sup>nd</sup>, and consider modifications to the proposal accordingly.  
(See "Agenda Item D-1"; Elliott Fitzgerald, 591-5379, [efitzgerald@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:efitzgerald@cityoftacoma.org))

#### **2. Billboard Regulations**

Continue to review the proposed sign code amendments concerning billboards.  
(See "Agenda Item D-2"; John Harrington, 279-8950, [jharring@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:jharring@cityoftacoma.org))

#### **3. Proposed Amendments to the Commission's Rules and Regulations**

Review and approve of the proposed amendments to the Commission's bylaws.  
(See "Agenda Item D-3"; Lihuang Wung, 591-5682, [lwung@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:lwung@cityoftacoma.org))

### **E. Communication Items & Other Business**

- (1) Letter from the Transportation Commission to the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee, regarding Sound Transit 3 Draft Priority Projects, July 7, 2015 (See "Agenda Item E-1")
- (2) Letter from Council Member Robert Thoms to the City Council and the Planning Commission, reading Affordable Housing, July 14, 2015 (See "Agenda Item E-2")
- (3) Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting, August 12, 2015, 4:30 p.m., Room 16; agenda includes: Work-Live/Live-Work Regulations; and Board of Building Appeals Interviews.
- (4) Planning Commission Meeting and Public Hearing, August 19, 2015, 4:00 p.m., Council Chambers; agenda includes: Billboards Regulations; Work-Live/Live-Work Regulations; and Public Hearing – 2015 Annual Amendment.
- (5) Community Informational Sessions for 2015 Annual Amendment:
  - Wed., August 12, 2015, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Baker Middle School, 8001 S. J St., Tacoma, WA 98408
  - Thur., August 13, 2015, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Stadium High School, 111 N. E St., Tacoma, WA 98403

### **F. Adjournment**







## **MINUTES** (Draft)

**TIME:** Wednesday, July 8, 2015, 4:00 p.m. (Special Meeting)  
**PLACE:** Room 335, Tacoma Municipal Building  
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Chris Beale (Chair), Stephen Wamback (Vice-Chair), Donald Erickson, Meredith Neal, Erle Thompson, Scott Winship  
**ABSENT:** Anna Petersen

### **A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL**

Chair Beale called the special meeting (an additional meeting to the regularly scheduled ones) to order at 4:00 p.m. A quorum was declared.

### **B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, proposed revising the agenda by adding Affordable Housing Regulations as Item D1 of the agenda. The agenda was approved as modified.

### **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

n/a

### **D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **1. Affordable Housing Regulations**

Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, facilitated a discussion to address issues raised at the Commission's meeting on July 1, 2015 during the discussion of proposals in the Affordable Housing Planning Work Program. He noted that the Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group (AHPAG) still had questions and a number of items to work on, but supported putting the proposal out for public comments. Mr. Barnett introduced Carey Jenkins, Community and Economic Development Department, who would be addressing the issues raised at the previous meeting.

The fee in-lieu concept was discussed. Mr. Jenkins reviewed that most of the initial options considered had been too complex and they ultimately arrived at a concept where the calculation was based on the land value. The concept was in essence that the City was giving the developer more land, which they valued at \$10,000 of extra value per dwelling unit. The reason for the number was that the AHPAG wanted to be able to incentivize development while increasing the dollar amount on an annual basis by a known inflation factor. Commissioners commented that some kind of data was needed to justify the number should it be challenged legally. Commissioners also expressed concern that the number was too low to generate much affordable housing. Mr. Jenkins commented that while the numbers may seem relatively small, when leveraged with other resources they can make a positive difference relative to affordable housing. He added that \$300,000 had leveraged 150 affordable units in the past. Commissioner Erickson commented that if the pay in-lieu would not be affected by the size of units then that the market would encourage large units with multiple bedrooms. Mr. Jenkins responded that the priority was to incentivize affordable housing in general and they would look at augmenting it for specific unit sizes later.

Vice-Chair Wamback asked if the bonuses incorporated into the mixed-use centers (MUCs) feasibility analysis were a separate bonus scenario or if the proposed affordable housing bonus was also included. Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division Manager, commented that while the affordable housing

component was one of multiple options considered, modifying the in-lieu fee would not have a dramatic effect on the economic analysis. Vice-Chair Wambach recommended that they could consider blending the two studies to measure the impact of the bonus options.

Mr. Jenkins discussed whether the program would be attractive to developers and how they could refine it over time. He commented that how developers would react to the program would fall into three options: they would continue to build and never touch the density bonus concept; they would pay the in-lieu fee; or they would build the units. If they found that over time they were not getting the units they would like they would augment the program to shift towards the creation of more affordable housing.

How monitoring and tracking over 50 years would work was discussed. Mr. Jenkins noted that they are already monitoring 1,400 units for affordability and habitability. They were also in the process of creating a monitoring structure for their 12-year property tax exemption program. For monitoring income eligibility the owners would provide data to the City for approval during a monitoring visit. Households would be required to self-certify and an affordability covenant would be recorded on the property that requires the set number of units to be available to households at 50% AMI. Commissioners asked about the enforcement process and expressed concern that scenarios exist that would result in hardship for people moving past the income threshold. Discussion ensued. Mr. Jenkins clarified that they normally have an analysis of the income prior to the renewal of the lease.

Mr. Jenkins continued through the issues raised during the previous discussion. He commented that the administrative burden on the owner would be non-significant provided that there was nothing outside of the ordinary. For income limits, Mr. Jenkins reported that they would use the Home Program Income Limits and the Tacoma Housing Authority Utility Allowance inputs to determine annually how much a property owner could charge for a unit.

## **2. 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update**

Jennifer Kammerzell, Public Works Department, continued the previous meeting's discussion of the Transportation Master Plan. Ms. Kammerzell briefly discussed the Mobility Master Plan appendix update and noted some of the modifications that had been made. The first sheet of the Project List was distributed and the scoring criteria were discussed. Ms. Kammerzell reported that over 420 projects were ranked across 3 tiers using scoring criteria that were aligned with the implementation strategies and performance measures of the Master Plan. Ms. Kammerzell noted that they anticipated some future updates to the scoring criteria and they would be adding a narrative that would explain the performance measures and terminology. Commissioners suggested language clarifications for the Project List.

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, introduced a review of the preliminary draft Comprehensive Plan including proposed new elements, with a focus on the goals and policies, formatting and layout, and work products still in progress.

Deborah Munkberg, 3 Square Blocks, provided a high level overview of the Comprehensive Plan noting that the framework includes guidance from the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), the Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040, Pierce County's Countywide Planning Policies, Tacoma 2025 – the City of Tacoma's Strategic Plan and Vision, and the City's existing Comprehensive Plan. Demographics were discussed. Ms. Munkberg noted that they were anticipated 59,000 new households in the city; household size was declining; the overall age is increasing; and household income is slightly lower than Pierce County as a whole.

Ms. Munkberg reviewed that the goals in the plan described the desired outcomes and the policies looked and how the goals can be achieved. She noted that they tried to allow for options in future implementation by avoiding regulatory language and providing a framework for decision making. The contents of the proposed plan volumes were also reviewed.

Mr. Atkinson noted that the major themes of the Comprehensive Plan update included the City's commitment to advancing equity and empowerment within the community; anticipating the effects of climate change and directly addressing sustainability; integrating with Tacoma 2025; articulating an urban design vision; and identifying focus areas and priorities in each chapter so that they could achieve more tangible results.

The Introduction and Vision Chapter was discussed. Ms. Munkberg reviewed that the chapter contained the context and the framework that the City is planning within; tables that describe each Element and their content; a summary of Community Involvement; and a focus on the Vision Statement. Mr. Atkinson added that the existing Comprehensive Plan was more focused on the context than the vision and values.

The Design and Development Chapter was Discussed. Mr. Atkinson reviewed the themes and noted that the overall focus of the chapter would be the human experience of the City and quality of life. Mr. Atkinson reported that the next step would be an ongoing conversation on design review. Chair Beale commented that he didn't see anything in the Chapter providing guidance on how design review would be considered. Vice-Chair Wamback recommended including a policy statement on design review in the goals section. Commissioner Erickson commented there was little reference to urban design as it relates to livability at the street level, solar exposure, and views. Discussion ensued on how to address policies related to views and signs within the chapter. Vice-Chair Wamback noted that content-based sign code had been ruled unconstitutional and recommended a more specific sign code policy. Vice-Chair Wamback commented that he would like to see a specific reference to farmer's markets in the Healthy Food section.

The Economic Development Chapter was discussed. Mr. Atkinson reviewed the themes and noted that the overall focus was on living wages, investment in centers, and sectors identified that would be the focus for job growth. The next step would be development of an economic strategy. Mr. Atkinson noted that they had received comments and recommendations internally. Vice-Chair Wamback commented that the Diversifying and Expanding Opportunity goal had over 40 related policies and questioned if they needed a goal for some of the key subsectors. He noted that EC-1.26, limiting conversion of industrial land, might need stronger top level goals. Chair Beale recommended strengthening EC-1.16 to make sure that the policy allows for the retention and improvement of small commercial convenience corners that don't have a zoning designation. Chair Beale commented that he didn't see anything for programs like Space Works that improve streetscape character. Commissioner Thompson suggested that it might be worth highlighting that Tacoma was an employment center in the region.

The Public Facilities and Services Chapter was discussed. Mr. Atkinson reported that they were going through a process to revise how they do capital facilities programming and would be having a conversation with the Commission about the prioritization of projects. They would also seek to update Level of Service (LOS) standards and review the metrics being used during the next round of capital facilities programming. There would be two key focus areas for investment: areas where they are not meeting service standards and areas they are prioritizing for growth. Capital improvements would be prioritized by the following criteria: public health and safety; correction of service deficiencies and provisions for future growth; alignment with City priorities; requirements mandated by law; public support; geographic equity; financial responsibility and sustainability; and environmental responsibility. Commissioner Thompson suggested considering a category for reducing vacant space. Commissioner Erickson recommended giving the numbers in Table 9.1 context by providing the LOS standards of other jurisdictions.

The Engagement, Implementation and Administration Chapter was discussed. Mr. Atkinson noted that the chapter focused on how they interact with the community and how the policies are implemented. The next step would be the creation of engagement tools and strategies for better reaching underrepresented groups in the community. Vice-Chair Wamback recommended a short paragraph or chart with implementation strategies. Chair Beale commented that Table 11-1 provided an opportunity to consider examining the R-2 lot size and increasing the number of units allowed per acre. Commissioners expressed support for increasing the target density for R-2 to 6-12 dwelling units per acre. Commissioner Thompson, noting that the North Slope already has more than the target density, suggested that they consider why they are trying to increase the density in an area that's already above the cap. Mr. Boudet responded that the North Slope is unique in that it does not easily fit into either single or multifamily zoning. Vice-Chair Wamback suggested that HMR-SRD could be moved into the single family group while recognizing that it has a higher density than the target. Commissioner Thompson commented that they may need a designation for areas that transition between different densities.

Mr. Atkinson proposed holding off on the Land Use designation review until a future meeting.

Greg Easton, Property Counselors, facilitated a discussion on the findings of the Mixed-Use Centers Feasibility Analysis. The purpose of the analysis was to look at the types of development, understand what is feasible, and the conditions under which different types of development were feasible.

Mr. Easton reviewed the methods used. They had examined the estimated development cost and compared it to the capitalized value, with the difference being the entrepreneurial return. Mr. Easton noted that entrepreneurial return would ideally be between 10% and 20% of the development cost. Four different development concepts were identified for analysis: 6<sup>th</sup> and Cedar, a site for a larger mixed-use building on a redevelopment site; 38<sup>th</sup> and G, a similar type of mixed-use building on a vacant site; 72<sup>nd</sup> and Pacific, a smaller scale building in a horizontally mixed-use configuration; and a redevelopment of an existing older building on South Tacoma Way. The four scenarios were compared across site area, number of floors, residential area, commercial area, residential units, and parking spaces.

The four scenarios were analyzed across three cases: a base case where the developer builds the project and charges market rate for the development; a case with an 8-year Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE); and a case with 20% of the units affordable at 80% AMI and a 12-year MFTE. The 6<sup>th</sup> and Cedar project was found to be feasible so long as the project took advantage of the 8-year MFTE, but would forgo too much income to meet the requirements of the 12-year MFTE. 38<sup>th</sup> and G would similarly be feasible only with the 8-year MFTE, but with a more robust return due to the lower property acquisition cost. 72<sup>nd</sup> and Pacific did not meet the 15% threshold of return in any of the cases due to the cost of providing parking under the building and a lower assumed rent than in the other scenarios. The South Tacoma Way scenario had significant potential returns in every case due largely to the low cost acquiring the existing building. Mr. Easton noted that the renovation of older buildings has a large number of variables and a change of use could trigger a series of expensive upgrades.

Mr. Easton commented that generally the “five-over-one” mixed-use projects were applicable to existing MUCs that had high rents and to a lesser extent in Crossroads MUCs with extensive multifamily development around them. Horizontal mixed-use was close to working in every area. Building reuse mixed-use would be appropriate in any of the older neighborhood MUCs with a commercial core. Mr. Easton reviewed the conclusions of the analysis: results were consistent with the 2007-2008 analysis; “five-over-one” development is feasible in high rent areas with an 8-year MFTE; redevelopment is more challenging than development of vacant site; horizontal mixed-use can be feasible with increasing rents; and opportunities for building renovation are site and building specific.

Chair Beale asked if “five-over-one” development would assume wood construction. Mr. Easton confirmed that it would and added that 12 stories is the minimum level that would be cost effective if concrete and steel were used. Commissioner Thompson asked if the proposed affordable housing density bonus would have any impact on a mixed-use project’s feasibility. Discussion ensued on the bonus palette and how it could potentially be applied to possible mixed-use projects. Vice-Chair Wambach asked if the cost of parking spaces could be spent instead on affordable units. Mr. Easton responded that it could, but noted that parking rent was also factored into the feasibility analysis. Mr. Atkinson commented that tailoring the height bonus palette could be part of the long-term agenda as they monitor the market.

## **E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no communication items.

## **F. ADJOURNMENT:**

At 7:26 p.m., the special meeting of the Planning Commission was concluded.



## **MINUTES** (Draft)

**TIME:** Wednesday, July 15, 2015, 4:00 p.m. (Public Hearing began at approximately 5:00 p.m.)

**PLACE:** Council Chambers, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Tacoma Municipal Building  
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

**PRESENT:** Chris Beale (Chair), Donald Erickson, Meredith Neal, Anna Petersen, Brett Santhuff, Dorian Waller, Scott Winship

**ABSENT:** Stephen Wamback (Vice-Chair), Erle Thompson

### **A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL**

Chair Beale called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. A quorum was declared.

### **B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved.

### **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting on July 1, 2015 were reviewed and Commissioner Erickson provided corrections to several typos. The minutes were approved as amended.

### **D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **1. Billboard Regulations**

John Harrington, Planning and Development Services, provided a review of proposed sign code amendments for billboards. Mr. Harrington reviewed that the objectives of the City were to develop new approaches to billboard regulations that would result in new code requirements, fewer billboards, less impact on neighborhoods, incentives to consolidate billboards, and to end litigation with Clear Channel Outdoor (CCO).

Zoning was discussed. A map of the locations for existing billboards was shown and it was noted that billboards were currently allowed in only the three industrial zones and C-2 commercial. Mr. Harrington reviewed that the Billboards Community Working Group (CWG) had selected zones as a priority for removal of billboards including residential, shoreline, and view sensitive overlay zones. The CWG had identified 11 zones where billboards should be allowed including Light Industrial, General Community Commercial, and Planned Development Business Districts. No agreement had been reached by the CWG on whether billboards should be allowed C-1, T, or NCX.

The CWG had reached a consensus to reduce all buffering requirements, but had no consensus for specific recommendations. Mr. Harrington commented that there were residential zones where buffers would not make sense including areas along highways or shielded by topography. It was noted that buffering from historic buildings would preclude any billboards downtown due to the number and proximity of historic buildings. He reviewed the different priority levels for buffers with residential zones given the highest priority and a 300-foot buffer by the CWG.

For dispersal, Mr. Harrington reported that there had been a consensus to reduce the current 500-foot dispersal requirement, but no specific recommendation. For size, CCO had expressed preference for allowing 672 square-foot billboards in all zones and additional flexibility in the dimension and orientation of signs mounted on buildings. For height, CCO had expressed preference for 40 feet in zones outside of PMI, as it was below the maximum height for buildings in C-2 zones and would allow billboards to be seen above street trees.

Chair Beale commented that his preference would be to see staff's recommendations and have Vice-Chair Wambach present for the discussion as he had been a member and co-chair of the CWG. Commissioners concurred on postponing further discussion until a future meeting.

## **2. 2015 Annual Amendment Package**

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, facilitated the Commission's continued discussion and review of the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, as part of the 2015 Annual Amendment.

The Urban Form chapter was discussed. Mr. Atkinson noted that it would focus on where growth was intended to happen and that it touches on the Mixed-Use Center (MUC) Review. The topics included mediating growth and change; providing a safe and attractive environment; providing efficient land use and transportation patterns; accommodating people of all ages and abilities; encouraging high quality design; leveraging arts to create a sense of place; and promoting compact, complete, and connected neighborhoods. Throughout the chapter there were key concepts that focus on the overall development pattern and character like MUCs, employment areas, transit station areas, corridors, open space corridors, signature trails, and historic residential areas. Some key maps were highlighted including the MUC map, the Employment Areas map, and the Parks and Recreation map.

Chair Beale recessed the meeting at 4:57 p.m. Mr. Atkinson later resumed his presentation following the public hearing at 5:12 p.m.

The Land Use Designations Review was discussed. Mr. Atkinson reviewed that there had been a multi-year process to reassess the system of intensities and improve clarity on what the long term plan intent is. During the process staff had identified inconsistencies between the intensities and the zoning. Consideration was also given to patterned corridors; intensifying existing land uses; the 20-minute neighborhood concept; and generally avoiding "downzoning". Some example scenarios were discussed where changes could be proposed to make zoning and Land Use Designations consistent. The future land use map was shown, demonstrating that the city would remain predominantly single family.

The Best Available Science Review was discussed. Some of the recommended changes proposed for the Critical Areas Preservation ordinance included changing the references to the updated 2014 Ecology wetland rating system; updating specific references to be more general; referencing the 2013 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Water Crossing Design Guidelines; and using revised definitions of isolated wetlands in accordance with Washington Department of Ecology guidance. The proposal would include the recommended changes as an attachment to the Comprehensive Plan to provide an opportunity for public comment.

Mr. Atkinson reviewed the comments received from the Commission. Comments fell into mainly three categories: 1. Requests for additional policies including business improvement areas, design review, signage compatibility, and activation of public realm and temporary spaces; 2. Comments about context including the acronyms needing definitions and better context for data; and 3. Organizational changes to chapters including requests to elevate the geological hazard policies in the Environmental Chapter and a number of changes proposed for the Economic Development Element. An additional request from the Commission was the concept of a work program road map. Mr. Atkinson reviewed the requested work program table organized by the Elements and proposed work program items.

Commissioners had the following comments and questions:

- Commissioner Erickson asked if the drop box comments had been incorporated. Mr. Atkinson responded that he had not read them yet, but would in the near future.
- Commissioner Waller asked if they could elaborate on engagement and who they would be targeting. Mr. Atkinson responded that the Equity office would be assisting by looking at the tools and strategies available that could be most effective.
- Chair Beale asked if the Commission would be seeing a finalized version of the draft report from John Owen on MUC typology. Mr. Atkinson responded that they were still working on the feasibility study and incorporating updated data. Chair Beale commented that since it was a significant piece, he didn't want it to get lost. It was noted that it would be identified as a separate document and that the report supported many of the amendments in the Comprehensive Plan.

- Chair Beale commented in agreement with Vice-Chair Wamback's prior recommendation for a specific policy for a of task force in the design review program.
- Chair Beale recommended that staff consider some specific policies for regulations on open space corridors.
- Chair Beale noted the goal to connect city neighborhoods to the trail system and recommended that connecting to city parks should also be part of that goal.

Chair Beale noted that the Commission was being asked to authorize the release of the 2015 Annual Amendment Package for public review and the package included the proposed Narrowmoor Addition Conservation District. He also noted that the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition had submitted a letter, which was included in the agenda as a communication item, requesting that Commissioner Thompson be disqualified from further action on this proposal. Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, reported that the West Slope Neighborhood Coalition had requested the recusal of Commissioner Thompson due to his position as Vice-Chair of the Master Builders Association Board which had run a campaign against the proposed Narrowmoor Conservation District. It was noted that Commissioner Winship had disclosed living in the area, but had not recused himself. The City's legal counsel had recommended that both Commissioners Winship and Thompson recuse themselves from further discussion and action on the Conservation District item based on the appearance of fairness, though they were not legally required to do so. Commissioner Winship commented that he had considered recusal, but was inclined to not recuse himself while being measured in comments that he might make. Chair Beale commented that the topic would need to be addressed at a future meeting with Commissioner Thompson present.

To facilitate the Commission's action to release the 2015 Annual Amendment Package for public review and set August 19<sup>th</sup> as the date for a public hearing, Mr. Wung explained that the package included five categories of subjects, i.e., Comprehensive Plan Update, Mixed-Use Centers Review, Affordable Housing Regulations, Code Cleanup, and Narrowmoor Addition Conservation District. All but the first item had previously been reviewed by the Commission and authorized, individually, for public review. Mr. Wung requested that the Commission consider authorizing the release of the Comprehensive Plan Update for public review before authorizing the entire package, because the votes for individual items can be different from that for the package. Upon receiving the Commission's authorization, staff would compile the text of the proposed amendments, the associated environmental review and other pertinent background information into a Public Review Document, which was expected to be available for review by the end of July, Mr. Wung stated.

Commissioner Erickson motioned to distribute the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update for public review. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Petersen. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Erickson motioned to distribute the 2015 Annual Amendment Package for public review and set August 19<sup>th</sup> as the date for a public hearing to receive public comment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Winship. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **3. Public Hearing – Work-Live/Live-Work Code Amendments**

At 4:58 p.m., Chair Beale called the public hearing to order and reviewed the procedures, noting that they would be taking testimony on proposed Work-Live/Live-Work Code Amendments.

Elliott Fitzgerald, Planning Services Division, reviewed that the proposal had been produced to improve upon the Work-Live/Live-Work code amendments originally adopted in 2012. The modifications were developed along with complimentary building code amendments. The proposal released for public review pertained to the land use component of the proposal and was intended to ensure code compatibility between the two regulatory codes. The key changes proposed to the land use code were to address code consistencies and clarifications; clarify that the uses are permitted in zones that allow for the associated mix of uses; and allow the uses in new construction. The next steps were noted with written comments accepted up to July 22. Chair Beale called for testimony. The following citizen testified:

#### **(1) Gary Knudson, Historic Tacoma:**

Mr. Knudson commented that the language being modified originated during the formulation of the subarea plans to incentivize work in existing buildings. He noted that the work-live use follows the

models of other jurisdictions to be able to incrementally occupy and upgrade existing structures. He felt that the new language was confusing the initial intent by lumping adaptive reuse and new construction together and that market pressure for new construction could imperil existing buildings. Mr. Knudson recommended the separation of the two provisions, existing and new, to maintain the original intent. He reiterated that they wanted to maximize the protection of existing buildings.

Seeing no one else coming forward, Chair Beale closed the public hearing at 5:11 p.m.

#### **E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Wung provided an update on the following items:

- a) A letter had been received from Congressman Adam Smith regarding the Downtown Tacoma Regional Growth Center Plan winning the 2015 VISION 2040 Award.
- b) A tour of the Tacoma Mall area was being considered for the Planning Commission and a poll on preferred times would be sent out.

#### **F. ADJOURNMENT:**

At 6:22 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:** Elliott Fitzgerald, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Live/Work & Work/Live Code Amendments**  
**Meeting Date:** August 5, 2015  
**Memo Date:** July 30, 2015

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on July 15, 2015 and kept the record open through July 22<sup>nd</sup>, to receive public comments on the proposed amendments to the Land Use Regulatory Code pertaining to live/work and work/live development. At the next meeting on August 5<sup>th</sup>, staff will facilitate the Commission's review of public comments received and consideration of modifications, if any, to the proposed code amendment.

Attached is a Public Comments and Staff Responses Report that summarizes comments received and the corresponding staff responses. If you have any questions, please contact Elliott Fitzgerald at (253) 591-5379, or at [efitzgerald@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:efitzgerald@cityoftacoma.org).

Attachments

c: Peter Huffman, Director





## Live/Work & Work/Live Code Amendments

---

### Public Comments and Staff Responses Report (For the Planning Commission's review on August 5, 2015)

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on July 15, 2015 and kept the record open until July 22, 2015 to receive public comment concerning the proposed amendments to Live/Work and Work/Live provisions within the Land Use Regulatory Code.

A *Public Review Document* was compiled and made available for public review prior to the public hearing. The document includes the complete text and Staff Analysis Report of the proposed amendments. The *Public Review Document*, relevant background information, and a notice of the Planning Commission's public hearing were posted on the project's webpage at [www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning). Public notice was also provided to various stakeholder lists.

One citizen testified at the public hearing and three written comments were received (see Attachments). Summarized below are the major issues and concerns reflected in the public comment and the corresponding staff responses.

#### **1. Subject: The proposed amendment would not prohibit live/work and work/live development in new construction and would not limit the applicability to Downtown and other mixed-use centers.**

##### **Issue:**

The purpose and intent of the Live/Work and Work/Live code amendments when originally adopted in 2012 was to incentivize the reuse and rehabilitation of underutilized preexisting buildings. Concern has been raised that allowing these uses in new buildings and outside of mixed-use centers and Downtown could potentially dilute that original intent.

##### **Staff Response:**

Staff agrees that when originally adopted, the provisions for these uses were intended to promote the development of live/work and work/live units as a mechanism to conserve and reuse older, economically distressed, or historically significant buildings. As further detailed below, staff believes that the proposed amendments continue to achieve and actually further that original intent.

Staff believes that it is not necessary to prevent this type of use in new buildings in order to achieve the basic goals of that intent, and that imposing such limitations would actually be a position inconsistent with the City's overall policy direction and existing code allowances. Though live/work and work/live uses were not explicitly referenced in pre-2012 iterations of the Land Use Regulatory Code, they were never necessarily prohibited, regardless of the age and location of the associated building. In fact, such configurations of land uses have been very common in traditional urban development – such as a corner store in which the shopkeeper

lives above or behind the tenant-owned working space. This form of mixed-use construction allows the public and employees to enter the working spaces without impacting the residence. The City is promoting mixed-use construction generally and, at their core, live/work and work/live uses are simply that, mixed-uses, they just happen to be provided in one combined unit instead of provided in separate residential and commercial/industrial units within one building. It would be inconsistent with our general policy direction to prevent the construction of mixed-use units in districts that allow new mixed-use buildings.

The discussion in 2012 focused on adding incentives to incorporate such configurations of uses back into older buildings, particularly within Downtown and in the other mixed-use centers. The intent was not to disallow a use – or rather a configuration of permitted uses – that had traditionally been allowed from a land use perspective.

Unfortunately, in the process of adding several development flexibilities that would incentivize the creation of live/work and work/live space for pre-existing buildings, some components of the adopted code amendments give the impression that these uses are outright prohibited in certain instances (i.e., buildings not lawfully in existence on September 25, 2012; buildings outside of Downtown or other mixed-use centers).

The current proposal would rectify confusion over where these uses are and are not allowed, how they are defined, and how the various incentives associated with historic or preexisting buildings are applicable based on different time-based distinctions. More importantly, it would also provide additional – and more substantive – development flexibilities to incentivize live/work and work/live development in the context of adaptive reuse. These flexibilities would be included within both the Land Use Regulatory Code and the Building Code, representing a significant improvement over the current incentives. For example, none of the incentives in the existing code are actually tied to historic or potentially historic buildings. The proposal includes incentives that directly support the adaptive reuse of such historic or older structures; essentially, the older the building, the more development incentives offered.

The two tables on the following page highlight these proposed improvements. While the first table illustrates how the existing code includes only three incentives tied only to preexisting buildings as of 2012, the second table reflects how the proposed code includes additional incentives that are more directly tied to older and historic buildings.

### Live/Work & Work/Live Development Flexibilities – Current Code

	Historic/Potentially Historic	In Existence prior to 12/05/89	In Existence prior to 09/25/12
<b>Exemptions from Design Standards – Minor Additions</b> (Land Use Code)			✓
<b>Parking Exemptions</b> (Land Use Code)			✓
<b>Exemptions from Off-Site Improvement Requirements</b> (Building Code)			✓

### Live/Work & Work/Live Development Flexibilities – Proposed Code

	Historic/Potentially Historic	In Existence prior to 12/05/89	Preexisting Buildings
<b>Exemptions from Design Standards – Minor Additions</b> (Land Use Code)	✓		
<b>Parking Exemptions</b> (Land Use Code)		✓	
<b>Exemptions from Off-Site Improvement Requirements</b> (Building Code)			✓
<b>Fire Sprinkler Flexibilities</b> (Building Code)		✓	
<b>No Change of Occupancy</b> (Building Code)			✓

## **2. Subject: The proposed amendment would remove the restrictions on live/work and work/live projects with more than 20 dwelling units.**

### **Issue:**

When rehabilitated and reoccupied, older buildings with smaller footprints contribute immensely to the livability and economic vitality of cities by preserving architectural diversity and providing affordable rental space for a wide variety of entrepreneurs. Removing the 20+ dwelling restriction may result in more live/work and work/live developments within larger, less affordable buildings, which may detract from the goal of incentivizing the reuse of older small buildings.

### **Staff Response:**

When the original amendments were adopted in 2012, the flexibilities associated with live/work and work/live uses were limited to projects with 20 or less dwelling units. There are multiple buildings within Tacoma that need redevelopment that would exceed 20 dwelling units. For example, the consultant's study on code compatibility examined the potential for Old City Hall to be redeveloped as work/live units; that project would include more than 20 units and, per their study, it was seen as a positive reuse possibility.

Although this strict limitation is being removed from the Land Use Regulatory Code, the proposal still includes incentives for incorporating live/work and work/live development that would only apply to smaller projects. The proposed Building Code provisions would exempt these uses from off-site improvement requirements only when located within preexisting buildings and under specific size thresholds (i.e., up to 10 dwelling units for live/work; up to 30,000 sq. feet for work/live).

### **Attachments**

- A. Emails from Sharon Winters and Rick Semple
- B. Letter from Historic Tacoma

## Attachment A

### Comments Received via E-mail

**From:** [swinters@nventure.com](mailto:swinters@nventure.com) [<mailto:swinters@nventure.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 31, 2015 4:40 PM  
**To:** [efitzgerald@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:efitzgerald@cityoftacoma.org)  
**Subject:** question/comment on live-work and work-live amendments

Hi, Elliott, I worked on the original initiative to put work-live/live-work in place in Tacoma. I appreciate and support most of the changes staff is suggesting re: changes to 2012 land use regs. The exception is the broadening of scope to include new construction. Work-live/live-work was originally conceived, and supported by CM Broadnax, as a means to reactivate older structures that were languishing vacant or under-utilized across the City... and to give the arts community the opportunity to adapt these older structures, at low cost, into work-live/live-work studios. While the historic preservation community sees the most advantage in the adaptive reuse of character-defining historic structures, we support the term "existing structures" as of the 2012 change. This acknowledges that, from an environmental perspective, it is important to adapt under-utilized buildings constructed with sustainable materials, rather than build new. I hope that staff and the Planning Commission will reconsider this change.

Also, when the land use regs were put in place in 2012, we turned our attention to the related building code issues, a tougher nut to crack. It seems that progress has been made on fire safety issues, etc. but can you tell me the timelines for getting the building code changes in place?

Thanks,

Sharon Winters

former Landmarks Preservation Commissioner and Historic Tacoma board member

**From:** rick semple <ricksemple@mac.com>  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** regarding Live/work, work/live...

Dear members of the planning commission,

Regarding the submitted amendment to the TMC for modifications to the live/work work/live (l/s,w/l) sections; I must address this issue strongly and generally.

I submit that we leave the already passed and approved zoning/land-use changes passed in 2012 in place and intact, they were a high point in the fight to implement a change of attitude toward our downtown's built environment; and its possibly bright future.

While the goal of making the zoning and the building code be separate and address their own issues is valid and good, the need to implement a viable and useful avenue for builders and artisans to actually make l/w,w/l happen in Tacoma is much more critical.

The idea of Adaptive Reuse of existing buildings is the origin of these live/work ideas.

Unless to find a new way to use, to adapt, our existing buildings in ways they were never intended to be used, we will lose these buildings.

This applies to most of downtown Tacoma.

**To ask for adaptive reuse policy to apply to new construction is wrong.**

We need to work to allow adaptive reuse through live/work, work/live to help work out the difficulties in meshing current fire and building code with older buildings in an enlightened reading of the IEBC. (International Existing Building Code)

The IEBC is not relevant to new construction.

If we allow new construction to ask for modifications relating to live/work,work/live this will defeat any rationale for having a judicious, inventive eye when looking at the reuse and repurposing of older buildings.

To put paragraphs on the books that fit neatly into categories is busywork.

to encourage, challenge and allow redevelopment and reuse is something noble and worthwhile.

Please take this request seriously and at least eliminate any mention of new construction from the proposal's pages.

This is a not impossible quest; to reinvigorate the existing urban fabric of Tacoma.

Thank you sincerely,

rick semple  
(253) 627-1315  
[ricksemple@mac.com](mailto:ricksemple@mac.com)

**Attachment B**  
**Letter from Historic Tacoma**



July 14, 2015

City of Tacoma Planning Commission  
Tacoma Municipal Building  
747 Market Street, Room 345  
Tacoma, WA 98402-3701

**Subject: Proposed Live/Work and Work/Live Code Amendments**

Dear Chair Beale and Commissioners:

Historic Tacoma consulted with staff 2 ½ years ago stressing the importance of using these new provisions to incentivise the reuse and rehabilitation of existing, pre-1989 buildings in our city. We did so because of the focus then on sustainability and the inherent value of older buildings and the loss of their considerable inherent resources when they are demolished for new construction as well as the costs of increasing landfill, etc.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2012 "groundbreaking" report, *The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse*, proved that saving and retrofitting older buildings consumes less resources than the demolition and construction of new buildings on a square footage basis. Since then new studies, such as *Older, Smaller, Better*, have demonstrated the value of retaining our cities' older, smaller buildings, which include:

- Support greater levels of positive and social activity than newer larger buildings.
- Have a significantly higher "Walk Score" (walkability) ranking than those with large, new buildings.
- Have a significantly higher proportion of non-chain restaurants and retailers resulting in a higher ratio of jobs and locally recycled dollars per occupied square foot than those with larger and newer buildings.
- Typically have significantly higher concentrations of businesses as well as businesses having a higher number of creative jobs per square foot commercial space than do larger newer buildings.

- Typically offered more affordable rents for small and start-up businesses than do larger newer buildings.

As late as 2014 the purpose of Work/Live was to “assist with the revitalization of Downtown Tacoma and the City’s other Mixed Use Centers. . . . by facilitating the conversion of older, economically distressed, or historically significant buildings to work-live units”, and to “help to reduce vacant space as well as preserve Downtown’s architectural and cultural past and encourage the development of a work-live and residential community Downtown, thus creating a more balanced ratio between housing and jobs in the region’s primary employment center.”

We were surprised then to find this recently adopted Purpose Statement from late 2012 deleted and replaced with a new Purpose Statement recommending that Live/Work units no longer be restricted to pre-December 1989 buildings in Downtown Tacoma and the city’s MUCs but instead would now be allowed in virtually any building, old or new. This is very troubling because even with 10% additions it is highly unlikely that existing buildings will be able to compete with the economics of newer, typically larger buildings built to code. In our opinion this is likely to expedite the removal and demolition of these pre-1989 buildings, many with unique architectural character and some with historical value, though the latter may not have been designated.

What was previously established as a tool to assist with the revitalization of the city’s Downtown and its MUCs, by incentivizing the reuse of its older buildings, has now apparently been pushed aside with the objective of allowing Work/Live units basically citywide in new or existing buildings in all of its Commercial and Mixed Use Districts. And under these provisions one is no longer limited to 20 units but can provide as many as can be fit in on a site. This at a time when we now know from empirical studies, such as those recently conducted in San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, DC by the Preservation Green Lab (a department of the National Trust for Historic Preservation), that older smaller buildings contribute immensely to the livability and economic vitality of our cities and neighborhoods when they are rehabilitated and reoccupied for new uses, such as Work/live. By providing more architectural diversity and a finer “grain” or footprint, these buildings have been shown to typically provide more jobs per square foot, have nearly twice as many businesses with women or minority ownership, and employ more persons per square foot of occupied space than larger, newer buildings with bigger footprints.

We would urge the Commission to carefully consider whether this is the direction we really want to go? Rather than incentivizing the reuse of our “greenest” buildings (those now existing) in fine grained “24 hour” centers we may in fact be incentivizing their demise to make room for newer, larger buildings that under the new provisions typically are less visually interesting architecturally, less affordable for those starting new businesses, less dense in terms of employees provided per 1,000 sq. ft., and less diverse in their employee makeup.

July 14, 2015  
Chair Beale and Commissioners  
Page Three

Thank you for your consideration.

Gary Knudson, President  
Historic Tacoma

*"The district must mingle buildings that vary in age and condition, including a good proportion of old ones so that they vary in the economic yield they must produce. This mingling must be fairly close-grained." Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, 1961*

<sup>1</sup> Older, Smaller, Better: Measuring how the character of buildings and blocks influences urban vitality, National Trust for Historic Preservation, May 2014

<sup>2</sup> Ibid



City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item  
D-2**

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** John Harrington, Development Services Division  
**Subject:** **Billboard Regulations**  
**Meeting Date:** August 5, 2015  
**Memo Date:** July 30, 2015

At the August 5, 2015 meeting, the Planning Commission will review and discuss specific staff recommendations outlined in Attachment A. Additionally; staff will discuss some concepts regarding an exchange mechanism and the companion agreement which will be integral to adoption of the new code standards. This meeting follows introductory meetings on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup>.

The City is exploring amendments to the special billboards regulations in the Tacoma Municipal Code, Section 13.06.521.M. The main objectives are to continue to reduce the number of billboards in the City and facilitate the move of 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.

The areas covered in the staff recommendation document include most of the regulated aspects of billboard signage. It is organized in the order the different topics appear in the Tacoma Municipal Code and includes three columns: one for the existing code requirements, one for the Community Working Group (CWG) recommendations, and the last for staff analysis and recommendations.

Some questions that will be used to help define the key components of an exchange program will be:

- What is the appropriate base for an exchange program (faces, structures, square footage, etc.)?
- What exchange rate should be used (1:1, 2:1, 3:1, etc.)?
- Are all credits equal or should they be modified to incentivize removal of certain types of signs or signs in particularly objectionable locations?
- Should the use of credits be conditioned based on which removal zone the credits came from?

As discussed at the last meeting, the resolution of this outstanding legal standstill will likely involve the adoption of a revised code as well as a separate companion agreement. A companion agreement would help ensure that the adoption of the code

amendments will result in significant change consistent with the overall project goals. Possible key points could be, but not limited to:

- Guaranteed overall reduction %;
- Removal of specific billboards;
- Removals from specific zones; and/or
- Specific timing of billboard reductions, and cap numbers.

Additional information relevant to billboards, including the Community Working Group's (CWG) full report is available on the Planning Services Division's website at [www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning) (and click on "Billboard Community Working Group").

If you have any questions, please contact me at 253-279-8950 or [jharring@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:jharring@cityoftacoma.org).

Attachment

c: Peter Huffman, Director

**Attachment A - Billboard Regulatory Comparisons**

<b>Existing Regulations TMC 13.06.521 M</b>	<b>CWG Proposal</b>	<b>Staff Analysis/Recommendation</b>
<b>1. New billboard signs</b>		
<p>a. Any new billboard must be installed in compliance with this chapter. In no case shall the number of billboard faces, associated structures and total square footage of billboards as defined by this code exceed that in existence on Aug 1, 2011. This number shall include faces for which relocation permits are held. Further, this number shall be reduced on March 1, 2012, by the number and square footage of nonconforming billboard faces in existence upon passage of this code.</p> <p>b. Expiration of relocation permits. Relocation permits issued pursuant to TMC 13.06.521 M prior to its amendment on September 1, 2011, related to the removal of nonconforming billboards, shall expire on September 1, 2012 or within 6 months of issuance, whichever is later.</p> <p>c. Demolition. Removal of all faces from a billboard structure shall also require the issuance of a demolition permit for the structure itself and removal of billboard faces (and their associated structures if necessary) shall be completed prior to the construction of new or relocated billboard faces. Structures removed shall be removed to grade and the grade restored at the site.</p>	<p><i>The CWG did not provide general code recommendations for new signs or an exchange mechanism. This is where that information would be presented in the code.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demo and final inspection of removed billboard structure(s) is required prior to approval of permit application for new sign if removal of nonconforming sign is required.</li> <li>• Overall number of structures/faces permitted at the time of adoption is 311 faces and 169 structures with its associated square footage (93,684 sf). These corresponding numbers will be reduced for billboard structures and faces not installed per code requirements in effect at the time of permits.</li> <li>• Pedestrian scale outdoor advertising signage no greater than 32 sf in size will be permitted in the C-1, NCX, CCX, UCX, CIX and all downtown districts. Such signs may locate on a building face which is perpendicular to the sidewalk if the near edge of the sign is within 10 feet of the sidewalk. This type of signage will also be allowed on permitted information kiosks. Such signage shall be a maximum of 7 feet above the adjacent sidewalk. There shall be minimum 200 foot dispersal between each pedestrian scale outdoor advertising sign. These signs will require a sign permit and square footage utilized will be deducted from banked billboard square footage.</li> </ul> <p><i>Rationale: No square footage credit for signs erected in violation of billboard sign requirements at time of permit (mostly for over-height signs erected on or after 11/15/88 when max sign height was reduced to 35 ft).</i></p> <p><i>Temporary off-premise advertising signs up to 32 sf in size are currently permitted in downtown districts on public facility sites. This recommendation would allow permanent, pedestrian-scale signs in the specified zones, some of which contain a significant number of existing billboards that are a high priority to remove (such as NCX and DR).</i></p> <p><i>Exchange mechanism still being developed, waiting for additional input from Planning Commission, City Council, CDA and Community Council.</i></p>
<b>2. Maintenance</b>		
<p>All billboards, including paint and structural members, shall be maintained in good repair and in compliance with all applicable building code requirements. Billboards shall be kept clean and free of debris. The exposed area of backs of billboards must be covered to present an attractive and finished appearance. Failure to maintain the billboard or its structure, including exterior painting, shall constitute a violation of this section and be subject to strict enforcement under the Land Use Code Enforcement procedures and penalties (Section 13.05.100), which many include removal by the City at the expense of the property owner, sign owner, or permittee. Maintain in good condition, clean, free of debris; no rust.</p>	<p><i>Retain existing</i></p>	<p><i>Retain existing</i></p>

KEY: Red text = recommended deletion    Bold Orange text = CWG recommendation    Bold Turquoise = Staff recommendation    Bold/Italics = Rationale/commentary for recommendation

### 3. Design

The following design standards shall apply to all billboards.

- a. Each sign structure must, at all times, include a facing of proper dimensions to conceal back bracing and framework of structural members and/or any electrical equipment. During periods of repair, alteration, or copy change, such facing may be removed for a maximum permit of 48 consecutive hours.
- b. No more than two billboard faces shall be located on a single structure.
- c. Billboard faces located on the same structure shall be positioned back-to-back (ie, their backs shall be parallel to each other) and within five degrees of perpendicular to the roadway from which they are to be viewed.
- d. Billboard faces must be in line with the support structure and no cantilevered design will be approved.
- e. The billboard face or structure must be located within ten (10) feet of the property line which fronts the roadway from which the billboard is to be viewed.
- f. No billboard can be located in such a way so that any portion of the sign face or structure is above a building.
- g. No billboard may be constructed on a site where there is a freestanding sign.

The following design standards shall apply to all billboards.

- Each sign structure must, at all times, include a facing of proper dimensions to conceal back bracing and framework of structural members and/or any electrical equipment. During periods of repair, alteration, or copy change, such facing may be removed for a maximum permit of 48 consecutive hours.
- No more than two billboard faces shall be located on a single structure.
- Billboard faces located on the same structure shall be positioned back-to-back (ie, their backs shall be parallel to each other) and within five degrees of perpendicular to the roadway from which they are to be viewed.
- Billboard faces must be in line with the support structure and no cantilevered design will be approved.
- The billboard face or structure must be located within ten (10) feet of the property line which fronts the roadway from which the billboard is to be viewed.
- No billboard can be located in such a way so that any portion of the sign face or structure is above a building.
- No billboard may be constructed on a site where there is a freestanding sign.\*

*Rationale: CWG believes the three design standards in red are not essential to stay in the regulations and removal would allow for more flexibility to new billboard structure locations.*

*Note that 3 c. has two standards, the first part requiring faces on the same structure to be positioned back-to-back should be retained, but the five degrees of perpendicular be removed.*

*\*The CWG was not definitive on prohibiting billboards on sites with a freestanding on-site sign. They felt if the site were large enough (not definite on what that exactly was) it could have both a billboard structure and a freestanding pole sign on-site.*

**a. A billboard may be permitted on a site which has an on-site pole sign if the billboard structure is located at least 300 feet from on-site pole sign(s). This billboard will count towards number of on-site pole signs allowed on the property.**

*This modifies the 3 g requirement to allow a large site to have a billboard and a freestanding on-site advertising sign.*

*Staff concurs with other CWG recommendations.*

<b>4. Landscaping</b>		
<p>The following standards apply to all billboards installed after August 1, 2011.</p> <p>a. No code required landscaping may be diminished for the installation of a billboard.</p> <p>b. When the base of the billboard support is visible from the adjacent sidewalk and/or street, the support shall be surrounded with a 5-foot wide landscaping buffer composed of shrubs and groundcover not to exceed 36-inches at mature height.</p> <p>c. Any alteration to any street trees (removal or pruning) is subject to City review and approval.</p>	<p>The following standards apply to all billboards installed after August 1, 2011.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No code required landscaping may be diminished for the installation of a billboard.</li> <li>• <b>When the base of the billboard support is visible from the adjacent sidewalk and/or street, the support shall be surrounded with a 5-foot wide landscaping buffer composed of shrubs and groundcover not to exceed 36-inches at mature height.</b></li> <li>• Any alteration to any street trees (removal or pruning) is subject to City review and approval.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Rationale: CWG does not think landscaping the base of support is necessary, code req'd landscaping for commercial use is sufficient.</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Concur with CWG recommendation</i></b></p>
<b>5. Dispersal</b>		
<p>Billboard faces not located on the same structure shall be a minimum of 500 feet apart, including billboards which may be located outside the City limits.</p>	<p>Billboard faces not located on the same structure shall be a minimum of <b>500 feet apart</b>, including billboards which may be located outside the City limits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>200 or less feet apart in Industrial zones (100-200 feet range)</b></li> <li>• <b>No recommendation for commercial zones. 300 feet or more v. 200 feet or less (100-400 feet range)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billboard faces <b>over 300 sf in size</b>, not located on the same structure shall be a minimum of 500 feet apart, including billboards which may be located outside the City limits.</li> <li>• Billboard faces <b>of 300 sf or less in size</b>, not located on the same structure shall be a <b>minimum of 300 feet</b> apart, including billboards which may be located outside the City limits.</li> <li>• Billboard faces <b>on downtown wall mounted billboards shall not be located within 200 feet of another billboard.</b></li> </ul>
<b>6. Size</b>		
<p>The maximum area of any one sign shall be 300 square feet, with the maximum vertical sign face dimension of 12 feet and maximum length of 25 feet, inclusive of any border and trim, but excluding the base or apron, supports, and other structural members; provided, cut-outs and extensions may add up to 20 percent of additional sign area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maximum 300 sf</b></li> <li>• <b>Maximum 672 sf in Industrial zones (M-1, M-2 and PMI)*</b></li> <li>• <b>No recommendation in mixed use, commercial and downtown districts (300 sf – 672 sf range, with split in downtown for upper range between 378 sf and 672 sf)</b></li> </ul> <p><b><i>*CWG members representing Neighborhood Councils, Scenic Tacoma and Historic Tacoma would prefer to limit billboard sizes in Industrial zones to 300 sf, except along SR 509 where 672 sf sizes would be acceptable to them.</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Max 300 sf in all non-industrial zones permitting billboards</b></li> <li>• <b>Max 672 sf in M-1, M-2 and PMI</b></li> </ul> <p><b><i>Retain existing vertical and horizontal face dimensions for pole mounted signs; building mounted signs flexible in vertical and horizontal dimensions.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Analysis: CCO wants to have 672 sf billboards allowed in all zones permitting them. The stand-still agreement supports the concept of consolidation to bulletin (672 sf) sized billboards, but the CWG was not in support of allowing them in all zones that would permit new billboards.</i></b></p>
<b>7. Lighting</b>		
<p>a. No internally illuminated billboards are allowed.</p> <p>b. All lighting must be shielded to maintain light on the subject property.</p> <p>c. Lighting shall be directed toward the billboard and utilize cutoff shields or other means to prevent glare and spillover onto adjacent properties or skyward.</p> <p>d. No flashing billboards shall be permitted.</p> <p>e. Signs shall not imitate or resemble traffic control devices</p>	<p><b><i>Retain current code</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Retain current code with the addition of standards addressing brightness and nighttime hour limitations (not developed yet - waiting for further research and collaboration with industry experts).</i></b></p>

**KEY:** Red text = recommended deletion    Bold Orange text = CWG recommendation    Bold Turquoise = Staff recommendation    Bold/Italics = Rationale/commentary for recommendation

**f. Buffers**

Sensitive uses/areas; No billboard shall be located on, in, or within 500 feet of the following, whether within or outside the Tacoma City Limits:

- a. A residential district;
- b. A mixed use district (X-district);
- c. Any publicly owned open space, playground, park, or recreational property, as recognized in the adopted Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element, as amended;
- d. Any religious institution or primary or secondary school; or
- e. Any designated historic or conservation district, whether on the federal, state, or local register of historic properties.
- f. Any shoreline district.

Sensitive uses/areas; No billboard shall be located **within the specified distance** of the following sensitive uses/areas whether within or outside the Tacoma City Limits:

**Buffer to residential districts:**

- **100 ft for billboards in industrial zones**
- **250 ft or less for billboards in commercial and mixed use zone**
- **No recommendation (100-300 range) for billboards in downtown zones to residential zones**

- *[Buffer to] A mixed use district (X-district);*

**Buffer to any publicly owned open space, playground, park, or recreational property, as recognized in the adopted Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element, as amended;**

- **250 ft or less for billboards in industrial and downtown zones**
- **100 ft or less for billboards in commercial and mixed use zones**

**Buffer to any religious institution or primary or secondary school;**

- **250 ft or less for billboards in industrial and downtown zones**
- **100 ft or less for billboards in commercial and mixed use zones**

**Buffer to no Billboard Zones and Overlay Districts (RCX, VSD, HIST, CONS, Shoreline, NRX, URX and HMX)**

- **250 ft or less for billboards in industrial and commercial zones**
- **No recommendation (100-300 ft range) for billboards in mixed use and downtown zones**

*CWG reached consensus support to reduce all buffers, but no consensus or recommendation on a specific level of buffer.*

*Some CWG members supported less restrictive conditions as a way to make billboard “receiving” zones more attractive.*

*Buffers are viewed as necessary to protect residential uses from the visual impacts of billboards. At the same time, a more compact urban environment promotes co-location of uses and results in relatively compact or narrow zoned areas: buffers can then have the effect of making a zone otherwise deemed appropriate because of its intensity of use unacceptable because it is too near other [protected] land uses.*

**Buffer to residential districts:**

- **Add URX and NRX as “Residential Zones,” for the purpose of billboard buffering.**
- **Concur with CWG - 100 ft for billboards in industrial zones**
- **Modify CWG - 250 ft or less for billboards in commercial and mixed use zones; reduce to 100 ft if billboard structure is 30 feet or less in height**
- **100 ft for billboards in downtown zones**

*The allowable uses and building height and bulk in the URX and NRX districts are very similar with R-3, R-4L and R-4 zones and are unlike the character of other, more commercial mixed use zones.*

*Non-residential parcels and rights-of-way zoned residential will not be buffered as residential zoned parcels with residential uses or capable of having residential uses. An example of this is stretches of SR 16 and I-5 and the steep slopes NE of Marine View Drive having residential zoning.*

*Based on the CWG rationale for lowering buffers from residential to industrial, based on the reasonable difference in expectation for those living in close proximity to a high intensity use area.*

*Billboard structures of 30 feet or less in height do not have as significant an adverse impact on nearby residential neighborhoods because they cannot be seen from a distance like the 35+ ft structures. 30 feet is well below the maximum height limit for buildings in commercial and mixed use zones permitting billboards so on site buildings may also block or reduce the view of lower billboard structures from adjacent residential zones.*

**Buffers to no Billboard Zones (Shoreline, DR, RCX, NCX, C-1 and T)**

- **100 ft for all billboards**

*The DR, NCX and RCX districts allow significant commercial uses. These zones are often situated immediately adjacent to zones the CWG considered appropriate for billboards – the DCC, DMU, and WR in the Downtown and UCX, CCX and CIX in the mixed use centers. A large buffer for these zones will negate the desired effect of including the mixed use zones allowing billboards. A minimum 100 ft buffer from these zones prevents billboards from being placed immediately adjacent to properties not permitting billboards. A lesser buffer is appropriate because expectation of protection from billboards and commercial uses in these districts is not the same as the protection expected for low density residential districts.*

**Buffers to no Billboard Overlay Districts (VSD, HIST, CONS)**

- **250 ft for all billboards.**

**Buffer to any special uses - churches, schools, any publicly owned open space, playground, park, or recreational property (add historic structures)**

- **100 ft for all billboards**
- **Billboards located within 250 feet of historic structures are subject to LPC review**

*Church only qualifies if religious assembly is the primary use of the parcel/assembly building. LPC review, approval and site specific conditioning is recommended for billboard permits to minimize visual impact to historic structures.*

<b>g. Height</b>		
<p>The maximum height of all billboard signs shall be 30 feet, except in the PMI District, where the maximum height shall be 45 feet. For the purpose of this section, height shall be the distance to the top of the normal display face from the main traveled way of the road from which the sign is to be view30 feet above adjacent roadway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No recommendation for signs allowed outside the PMI. Range 30 ft to over 35 ft in all zones outside PMI</b></li> </ul> <p><i> CWG was split on height. Approximately 1/3 of the group voted to retain current 30 ft limit in all zones outside industrial areas. Another 1/3 voted to increase the height to 35 ft in all zones. Retain 45 ft height in PMI.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>If located within 500 feet of residential, shoreline, view-sensitive, historic, and conservation districts: Maximum 30 feet high, except in downtown where building mounted signs may be 40 ft high.</i></li> <li>• <i>If located more than 500 feet from residential, shoreline, view-sensitive, historic, and conservation districts: Bottom of sign face may be a maximum of 5 feet over height of tallest onsite buildings or 40 ft high, whichever is less</i></li> </ul> <p><i>CCO would like to have billboard structures 40 ft high in zones other than PMI that permit them. Allowing additional height in some cases will provide additional flexibility to support the desired exchanges, and staff feels that some additional height allowances with the included limitations will help ensure that the additional height does not result in billboards that are unreasonably out of scale with surrounding development or objectionable to nearby sensitive uses/zones.</i></p>
<b>h. Location</b>		
<p>Billboards shall only be allowed in the C-2, M-1, M-2 and PMI zoning districts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billboards shall only be allowed in the C-2, M-1, M-2 and PMI zoning districts</li> <li>• <b>Add UCX, CCX, CIX,DCC, DMU, WR, PDB to zoning districts allowing billboards</b></li> </ul> <p><i>The rationale for the expansion of new zones varied among the members: the primary focus was on the nature of development in the zone. Many members observed that the 7 additional zones share similar characteristics to industrial and commercial zones where billboards are now permitted. The less residential, the more open the group was to considering allowing billboards. In some cases, the group assessed what they thought a reasonable expectation (being protected from billboards) for someone choosing to live in the zones, other types of uses allowed in the zones, or development patterns and expectations for the zones.</i></p> <p><i>Neighborhood Tacoma, Scenic Tacoma, and Historic Tacoma representatives in particular stated that their support for allowing billboards in these new zones was conditioned on conservative buffer, dispersal, and sign size and type conditions.</i></p> <p><i>The HMX exclusion fell into the group of zones not currently having any billboards and the group felt on a balance it was more appropriate to continue to keep billboards out of these areas (though they allowed them in the PDB where no billboards exist).</i></p>	<p><i>Concur with CWG recommendation for allowed billboard zones, plus</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Add HMX as additional zoning district allowing billboards</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Rationale: HMX is very similar to UCX and more intense than CCX and CIX when it comes to bulk and height of buildings, intensity of use and traffic generated on a 24/7 basis. This will add another desirable area in which to actuate the removal of billboards from undesirable areas and removal of billboards that are non-conforming for multiple reasons.</i></p> <p><i>Another reason for the addition of zones is that the existing four billboard zones have a heavy concentration of billboards. This was likely a major factor in the failure of amortization to achieve any significant consolidation and reduction in numbers and relocation to more acceptable areas.</i></p>





City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item  
D-3**

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Proposed Amendments to the Commission's Rules and Regulations**  
**Date of Meeting:** August 5, 2015  
**Date of Memo:** July 29, 2015

At the next meeting on August 5, 2015, the Planning Commission will review, and consider approving of, the proposed amendments to the Commission's Rules and Regulations (i.e., Bylaws). The Rules and Regulations were last amended in December 2010. Amendments are needed to keep the information current and better accommodate the Commission's conduct of business.

Attached are the proposed amendments, which include the following main changes:

1. Streamline the procedures for the nominations and elections of officers by conducting both at one meeting (the last meeting of June), instead of over two meetings; [see attached amendments, Section I.B.]
2. Change the definition of quorum from "a simple majority of members" to "a simple majority of filled positions", to be consistent with the proposed amendments to TMC 13.02; [Section IV.D.]
3. Add procedures for telephonic participation in meetings; [Section IV.E.]
4. Add "public comment" to the meeting agenda; [Section IV.H.1.]
5. Remove the delineation of the types of conduct that constitute violation of the Code of Ethics and refer to TMC 1.46 for such detail. [Section VII.A.]

If you have any questions, please contact me at 591-5682 or [lwung@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:lwung@cityoftacoma.org).

Attachment

c: Peter Huffman, Director





## TACOMA PLANNING COMMISSION

### RULES AND REGULATIONS

The following Rules and Regulations of the Tacoma Planning Commission were originally adopted by the Commission on April 20, 1970, and subsequently amended on July 21, 1980, August 21, 1995, May 21, 1997, June 7, 2000, October 20, 2004, November 18, 2009, and December 1, 2010, and August 5, 2015. These Rules and Regulations conform to the statutory authority of the City Charter (Article III, Section 3.8 – City Planning Commission) and the Tacoma Municipal Code ([TMC](#)) (Title 13, Chapter 13.02 – Planning Commission).

The Rules and Regulations contain the following ~~items~~sections:

- I. ~~Election and Terms of Office~~Officers
- ~~II. Duties of Officers~~
- ~~III.~~II. Establishment of Advisory Committees and Task Forces
- ~~IV.~~III. Long-Range Planning Division Manager Staffing
- ~~V.~~IV. Meetings
- ~~VI.~~V. Records
- ~~VII.~~VI. Annual Report ~~to the City Council~~
- ~~VIII.~~VII. Miscellaneous
- ~~IX.~~VIII. Rules and Regulations Amendments

#### I. ~~Election and Terms of Officers~~s

A. The Commission shall elect its own Chair, Vice-Chair, and such other officers as from time to time it may determine it requires, all of whom shall be members of the Commission.

~~1.B.~~1.B. Nominations and ~~Elections~~elections ~~– Officers of officers~~ shall be ~~nominated~~conducted at the ~~first~~last meeting in June of each year. ~~Elections shall be held at the following meeting.~~ New officers will assume duties ~~at~~after the meeting following their election.

~~2.C.~~2.C. Officer Qualification Considerations – The Officers should:

- a) be interested in holding the position(s);
- b) be able to devote sufficient time to Commission business; and
- ~~e)~~ ~~be committed to~~attending as many ~~regular and special~~ Commission meetings as possible;
- ~~e)c)~~c) be prepared to make presentations to the City Council, citizens, committees, neighborhood groups, and service clubs regarding Commission responsibilities, projects, plans and policies; and
- ~~e)d)~~d) have sufficient experience on the Commission to understand its role and functions and to have a basic understanding of the City's Comprehensive Plan policies and development regulations.

~~B.D.~~ The term of office shall be for one (1) year or until the next scheduled election. In case of any vacancy in office, the vacancy shall be filled by an election at the first regular meeting after the occurrence of such vacancy.

## ~~II.~~ ~~Duties of Officers~~

~~A.E.~~ ~~Chair~~ ~~Duties of Officers~~ – The Chair shall preside over all meetings of the Commission. All resolutions adopted by the Commission and Commission correspondence shall be signed in his/her name as Chair of the Commission. ~~Vice-Chair~~ – In the event of the absence of the Chair or his/her inability to act, the Vice-Chair shall take his/her place and perform his/her duties. In the event of the absences or inability to act of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the remaining members of the Commission shall appoint one of their members to temporarily act as Chair.

## ~~III.II.~~ ~~Establishment of~~ Advisory Committees and Task Forces

A. Advisory Committees – The Commission may establish advisory committees as it deems appropriate, following the procedures as ~~authorized~~ set forth in the ~~Tacoma Municipal Code Section~~ TMC 13.02.015.

B. Task Forces – The Commission may also establish task forces as it deems appropriate to conduct extended and supplemental analyses of issues identified and defined by the Commission. Task forces are ad-hoc and issue-oriented in nature and shall not be construed to have the same organization and operation as those of “advisory committees.” A task force shall be comprised of up to four (4) members of the Commission designated by the Commission by a majority vote. Chairpersons of task forces may be designated by the Chair of the Commission. There shall not be more than two task forces operating at any given time. Task forces shall serve at the discretion of the Commission and their duties and responsibilities shall be established by the Commission. All task force meetings shall be open to the public and ~~pursuant to Sections V.F.1 & V.F.2 of~~ conducted in accordance with these rules. Task forces may not conduct public hearings.

## ~~IV.III.~~ ~~Long-Range Planning Division Manager~~ Staffing

The Long-Range Planning Division Manager and/or his/her designee (hereinafter referred to as Staff) shall organize and supervise clerical details of the Commission's business and shall be responsible to the Commission for the proper preparation and maintenance of records of meetings, hearings, official actions and all public records. ~~The Long-Range Planning Division Manager~~ Staff shall be responsible for providing such other ~~staff~~ service as may be required by the Commission within the limits of the budget for the ~~Community and Economic~~ Planning and Development Services Department as approved by the City Council.

## ~~V.~~ IV. Meetings

A. Regular Meetings – Regular public meetings of the Commission shall be held on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. in Room 16 of the Tacoma Municipal Building North, or in another location designated by the Commission. If the regular meeting day falls on a legal holiday, the Chair of the Commission shall fix

another day therefore and give notice of said meeting as hereinafter providing for "special meetings." The notice for any regular public meeting shall indicate the date, time, place and business to be transacted, and be distributed prior to the meeting to those individuals and organizations listed on the mailing list that shall be maintained by ~~the Long-Range Planning Division Manager~~Staff and may be subject to the Commission's approval.

- B. Public Hearings – Public hearings conducted by the Commission shall be held in the Council Chambers of the Tacoma Municipal Building or another location designated by the Commission and indicated in the notice of hearing. The date and time of the hearing shall be determined by the Commission and indicated on the notice of hearing. Notices for public hearings shall be distributed in accordance with the ~~Tacoma Municipal Code Section~~TMC 13.02.057. Notices shall also be mailed, prior to the hearing, to those on the mailing list as hereinabove provided, to those individuals or organizations which have indicated in writing to the ~~Community and Economic Planning and~~ Development Services Department an interest in the subject(s) of the hearing, and to other interested parties as deemed appropriate by the Commission. An additional notice shall be required for matters continued for further hearing and continued to a time, date, and place certain.
- C. Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Commission set for a time different than regularly scheduled as hereinabove provided shall be held at such times as the Commission may determine, or may be called by the Chair for any time upon the written request of three members of the Commission. Special meetings shall be open to the public. Per RCW 42.30.080, special meetings require at least 24 hours' written notice. Such notice shall indicate the date, time, place and business to be transacted. Notices of special meetings shall be distributed to the same recipients of notices for regular public meetings, to the recipients on the special press mailing list on file with the City Clerk's Office, and to other interested parties as deemed appropriate by the Commission.
- D. Quorum – A quorum for the transaction of official business shall consist of a simple majority of ~~the members~~filled positions of the Commission, per TMC 13.02.041 ~~but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time.~~
- E. Telephonic Participation in Meetings – Members of the Commission may attend meetings by telephone, with a limit of one Commissioner per meeting. Notice of telephonic attendance must be provided to Staff not less than forty-eight hours before the scheduled start time for the meeting. If more than one Commissioner wishes to attend a meeting telephonically, the first Commissioner to notify Staff shall be the one permitted to do so. There shall be a telephone device that enables the remote participant and all persons present at the meeting location to be clearly audible to one another. The remote participant shall be considered to be actually present at the meeting for the period of time he/she is so connected to the telephone line, and that presence shall count toward a quorum of the Commission for all purposes.
- D.F. Absences – Requests by members to be excused shall be stated by the member at a Commission meeting or be submitted to the Commission or be directed through Staff who shall then present the request to the Commission. The Commission shall then approve or deny the request. Upon a member's missing three (3) unexcused consecutive regular meetings, the Commission shall afford such member a hearing to

determine whether the absences are to be excused. If the Commission determines not to excuse such absences, then the Commission shall determine the question of whether the Commission shall recommend to the City Council that such member should be deemed to have forfeited his/her office and a new member be appointed to fill the unexpired term. ~~Requests by members to be excused shall be stated by the member at a Commission meeting or be submitted to the Commission or be directed through the Long-Range Planning Division Manager or his/her representative who shall then present the request to the Commission. The Commission shall then approve or deny the request.~~

E.G. Every official act taken by the Commission shall be by resolution or by motion by an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum. In the event that a member disqualifies themselves or passes, this is to be registered as "not voting". Notwithstanding Robert's Rules of Order, the Chair shall vote on all resolutions or motions.

F.H. Conduct of Meetings

1. Order of ~~business~~Business – The following order of business may be modified for any meeting by a suspension of the rules, concurred in by a majority of the voting members present, except that consideration of matters set for public hearing must occur at or following the time indicated on the hearing notice:

a) Call to Order and Roll Call

b) Approval of agenda

~~b)c)~~ Approval of minutes not previously approved

d) Public comment (The Chair shall decide whether this item will be included in the agenda, and if so, how much time will be allowed for each speaker and whether all comments shall be limited to items on the agenda.)

~~e)e)~~ Discussion items ~~in the order set forth in the meeting agenda.~~ (Matters set for public hearing shall be considered at such time as determined by the Commission and set forth in the hearing notice.)

~~e)d)~~ Other business

~~e)f)~~ Communication (This may include other business brought forward by Commissioners, comments by Commissioners, and comments and additional information provided by Staff.)

~~f)~~ Comments by Long-Range Planning Division

~~g)~~ Comments by Planning Commission

~~h)g)~~ Adjournment

~~i) The preceding order of business may be modified for any meeting by a suspension of the rules, concurred in by a majority of the voting members present, except that consideration of matters set for public hearing must occur at or following the time indicated on the hearing notice.~~

2. Conduct of regular and special meetings:

a) The Chair of the Commission shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the Commission ~~except as provided for in Section II of these rules.~~

- b) The Chair introduces the agenda items.
- c) ~~The Long-Range Planning Division Manager~~ Staff ~~and/or his/her representative~~ presenters invited by staff, ~~if appropriate,~~ summarizes the ~~staff report or other~~ information prepared or received by the staff on the agenda item.
- d) The Commission considers requests and may ask questions of the staff ~~and/or others in attendance at the direction of the Chair~~ presenters. Comments by the public on the agenda item under consideration may be permitted, but only at the discretion of the Chair.
- e) The Chair asks for reports from advisory committees or task forces, if appropriate.
- e)f) The Commission takes appropriate action, if an action is required.

### 3. Conduct of public hearings:

- a) The Chair of the Commission shall preside over all public hearings conducted by the Commission ~~except as provided for in Section II of these rules.~~
- b) The Chair calls the public hearing to order and announces the procedure for the public hearing as established by the Commission.
- c) ~~The Long-Range Planning Division Manager or his/her representative, if appropriate,~~ Staff summarizes the staff report or other information prepared or received by the staff on the hearing item.
- d) ~~Communications, not contained in the Commission's report, received concerning the hearing item are presented to the Commission.~~
- e)d) \_\_\_\_\_ The Chair asks for reports from advisory committees or task forces, if appropriate.
- f)e) The Commission ~~hears those persons wishing to give~~ receives oral testimony.
- g)f) The Chair either closes the hearing and announces the date upon which the record of the hearing will remain open to receive additional written comments, or continues the hearing to a later date if there is a finding by the Chair that all interested parties have not been afforded an adequate opportunity to testify before the Commission or if new information is to be considered on which the Commission feels additional public testimony to be appropriate.
- h)g) \_\_\_\_\_ At a meeting(s) subsequent to the public hearing, the Commission considers all oral and written testimony concerning the hearing item and acts to approve, disapprove, modify, or defer the decision-making until the completion of additional analyses.

### ~~G.~~ I. Open Public Meetings Act and E-mail Exchanges

E-mail exchanges between members of the Commission can constitute a violation of the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), Chapter 42.30 RCW. Generally, if a majority of the members participate in an e-mail discussion of Commission business, the members are conducting a meeting in violation of the OPMA requirement that meetings must be "open to the public with prior notice." It is

suggested that Commission members observe the following guidelines to avoid OPMA problems with e-mail exchanges:

1. When possible, limit e-mail exchanges on issues related to Commission business to less than a majority of Commission members. Sending copies of an e-mail to less than a majority may not suffice if subsequent exchanges relay the content of the original exchange to a majority of members.
2. Never decide at an open meeting that a majority of the Commission will continue or complete discussion of an agenda item by e-mail.
3. One-sided (no response anticipated) informational e-mails to a majority or more of Commission members are probably consistent with the OPMA. In open meetings, the Commission members should verbally announce that they have sent this type of e-mail if it relates to the discussion at hand. Commission members are free to engage in e-mail exchanges with staff on one-sided e-mails, but not with each other.
4. E-mail exchanges on issues that the Commission will not address are consistent with the OPMA. However, if any reasonable chance exists that an issue relates to a vote that may or will come before the Commission, a majority of the Commission should not subject the issue to e-mail discussion.

#### VI.V. Records

- A. The Commission's adopted summary minutes of the public meetings shall be the official records. The actual recording of each hearing item shall be the official record for such item.
- B. Supplemental records pertaining to matters of public meetings and public hearings shall be kept on file in the ~~Community and Economic~~Planning and Development Services Department as required by law. These supplemental records may include but not be limited to the following:
  1. Description of agenda items, including all submitted information therewith.
  2. Report of the ~~Community and Economic~~Planning and Development Services Department, Commission Advisory Committees and Task Forces on the matter as presented to the Commission at a meeting thereof, including such material submitted in writing and in map form.
  3. Written communications concerning the matter.
  4. Facts concerning the matter.
  5. Records of all actions taken by the Commission in the matter (resolutions, motions, setting of dates for hearings, etc.).
  6. Record of actions taken by the City Council in the matter (ordinances, resolutions, results of hearings, etc.).

- C. Recorded transcripts or summary minutes of all official Commission proceedings shall be filed with the City Clerk and shall be opened to public inspection.

~~VII.~~VI. Annual Report ~~to the City Council~~

Pursuant to TMC 13.02.040, ~~The the~~ Commission shall annually report to the City Council regarding accomplishments and the status of planning efforts undertaken in the previous year, and if applicable, the outlook of planning issues for the coming year. Said report is typically prepared in July of each year and should, at the discretion of the Chair, take the form of a letter, a memorandum, a summary report or a copy of relevant minutes of the Commission's meetings, and may be posted on the City's website.

~~VIII.~~VII. \_\_\_\_\_ Miscellaneous

- A. Code of Ethics – Members of the Commission shall comply with the City of Tacoma's Code of Ethics pursuant to ~~the Tacoma Municipal Code Chapter~~TMC 1.46 while conducting Commission business. ~~The types of conduct that constitute violations of the Code of Ethics include 1) conflicts of interest, 2) financial interests and personal gain in contracts, 3) beneficial influence in contract selection, 4) representation of private person at City proceeding, 5) certain private employment, 6) beneficial interest in legislation, 7) disclosure of confidential information, 8) improper use of position, 9) improper use of City personnel, 10) improper use of City property, 11) acceptance of compensation, gifts, favors, rewards or gratuity, and 12) impermissible conduct after leaving City service.~~
- B. Disclosure of Contacts – Individual members of the Commission may, but are not required to, participate in or initiate discussions with interested parties affected by issues under consideration by the Commission. Such meetings or contacts with citizens should be disclosed at the next scheduled meeting of the Commission. The intent of such disclosures in a public setting is to preserve the integrity of the Commission's process and provide a record and notice to other individuals who may also be affected or interested. If a Commissioner receives a request to meet/discuss but prefers not to do so, he/she may suggest the requesting ~~parties~~parties to express their comments and concerns through the normal procedures, i.e., providing testimony at public hearings and/or providing comments to staff.
- C. Contact Information – The ~~generic~~ contact information of members of the Commission should be considered public information and made available for public access upon request.
- D. Conferences – Members of the Commission may attend, at their own expense, conferences, meetings and training courses closely related to Commission business.

~~IX.~~VIII. Rules and Regulations Amendments

The Rules and Regulations may be amended by the Commission by a majority of vote at any ~~regular or special~~ meeting.





City of Tacoma  
Transportation Commission

July 7, 2015

Ryan Mello, Chair  
Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Council Committee  
747 Market Street, Suite 1200  
Tacoma, WA 98402

Re: Sound Transit 3 Draft Priority Projects

Dear Chair Mello,

The Transportation Commission received a presentation from Sound Transit on June 17<sup>th</sup> regarding a potential ST3 ballot measure. The presentation included discussion of draft priority projects which might be considered as part of ST3. Sound Transit has asked that the City provide comments on the proposed ST3 projects to them no later than July 15<sup>th</sup>. With this letter, the Transportation Commission respectfully submits our recommendations to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee for consideration.

The Transportation Commission is pleased to report that Sound Transit has included several improvements which were previously recommended by the City and the Transportation Commission during the development of Sound Transit's Long Range Plan. Key among these are extending Central Link to the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center and expansion of the Tacoma Link westerly toward Tacoma Community College. These improvements were both included within the draft Transportation Master Plan (TMP) approved by the Transportation Commission earlier this month. We suggest that the City provide comments to Sound Transit that support the near-term priorities within ST3 and also continued development of the system concepts illustrated in the TMP.

The Transportation Commission believes the highest priority for the City should be extending Central Link to the Tacoma Mall, and appreciates inclusion of projects S-3 and S-4 in the draft priority projects. Extending Central Link to the Tacoma Mall, and thereby connecting Pierce County with the rest of the region, should be considered a priority within ST3. When in operation, Central Link service to Tacoma should provide efficient and frequent service which prioritizes Regional Growth Centers.

The City appreciates inclusion of project S-11, Tacoma Link Extension, in the draft priority projects, and supports identifying the expansion toward Tacoma Community College as the next phase of Tacoma Link. Continued development of Tacoma Link is an important component of regional transit service for the south part of Sound Transit's system. The Transportation Commission suggests that ST3 project P-01, Future System Planning (ST4), include continued evaluation of the other expansions of the Tacoma Link System shown in the City's Transportation Master Plan, including expansion to the southeast (Portland and Pacific Avenues) and expansion to the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center.

The draft priority list also includes expanded operation of the existing Sound Transit network. The Transportation Commission would like to highlight projects S-06, S-07, and S-08, which would provide for expansion of Sounder service by extending platforms and allowing the use of longer trains, and by increasing the frequency of train service. The Commission believes these are important additions to the plan, particularly S-08, which could provide more frequent service.

Sincerely,

Jane Ann Moore  
Co-Chair

Justin D. Leighton  
Co-Chair

cc: Mayor Marilyn Strickland  
Tacoma City Councilmembers  
Tacoma City Manager  
Chris Beale, Planning Commission Chair  
Chelsea Levy, Sound Transit

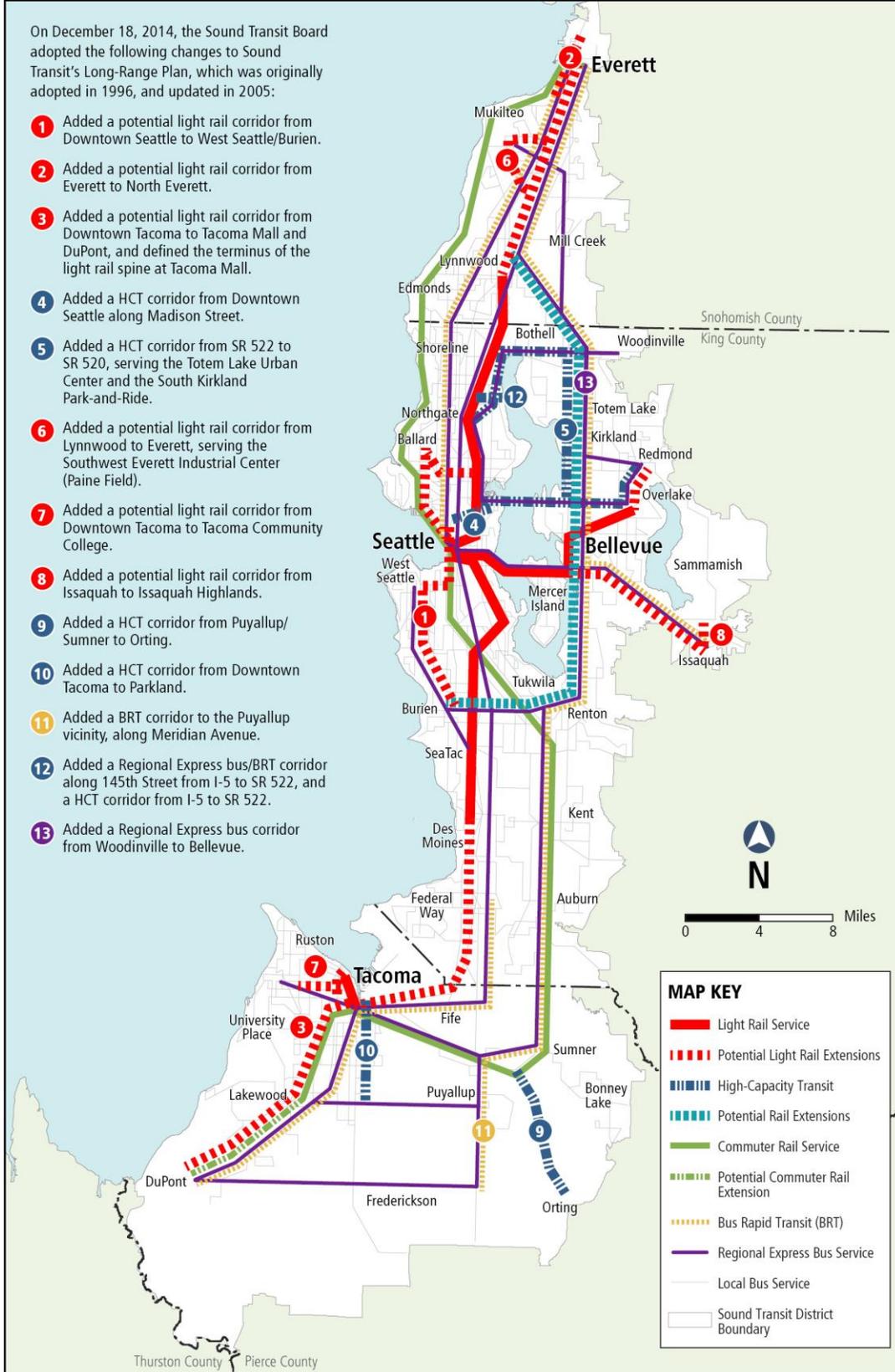
Attachments

# 2014 LONG-RANGE PLAN



On December 18, 2014, the Sound Transit Board adopted the following changes to Sound Transit's Long-Range Plan, which was originally adopted in 1996, and updated in 2005:

- 1 Added a potential light rail corridor from Downtown Seattle to West Seattle/Burien.
- 2 Added a potential light rail corridor from Everett to North Everett.
- 3 Added a potential light rail corridor from Downtown Tacoma to Tacoma Mall and DuPont, and defined the terminus of the light rail spine at Tacoma Mall.
- 4 Added a HCT corridor from Downtown Seattle along Madison Street.
- 5 Added a HCT corridor from SR 522 to SR 520, serving the Totem Lake Urban Center and the South Kirkland Park-and-Ride.
- 6 Added a potential light rail corridor from Lynnwood to Everett, serving the Southwest Everett Industrial Center (Paine Field).
- 7 Added a potential light rail corridor from Downtown Tacoma to Tacoma Community College.
- 8 Added a potential light rail corridor from Issaquah to Issaquah Highlands.
- 9 Added a HCT corridor from Puyallup/Sumner to Orting.
- 10 Added a HCT corridor from Downtown Tacoma to Parkland.
- 11 Added a BRT corridor to the Puyallup vicinity, along Meridian Avenue.
- 12 Added a Regional Express bus/BRT corridor along 145th Street from I-5 to SR 522, and a HCT corridor from I-5 to SR 522.
- 13 Added a Regional Express bus corridor from Woodinville to Bellevue.



## DRAFT PRIORITY PROJECTS LIST

As part of the planning process to determine how and where our regional mass transit system should expand, the Sound Transit Board identified a draft priority projects list shown in the table below. This draft list of projects is being considered for public feedback from June 4 – July 8, 2015. After incorporating public feedback, projects on the final list will be studied for possible inclusion in an ST3 ballot measure that could go to voters as early as November 2016. Starting in fall 2015, further analysis will help narrow the options that could be included in a ballot measure. [View projects on a map at soundtransit3.org](http://soundtransit3.org)

NO.	PROJECT NAME	MODE	DESCRIPTION
<b>NORTH CORRIDOR</b>			
N-01	Everett Station to North Everett	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail from Everett Station to North Everett.
N-02a	Lynnwood Transit Center to Everett Station via the Southwest Everett Industrial Center (Paine Field)	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail from Lynnwood to Everett Station, serving the Southwest Everett Industrial Center (Paine Field) via I-5 and Airport Road.
N-02b	Lynnwood Transit Center to Everett Station via I-5 and SR 99/Evergreen Way	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail from Lynnwood to Everett Station generally via I-5, SR 99 and Evergreen Way.
N-02c	Lynnwood Transit Center to Everett via I-5	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail, primarily in an elevated profile, from Lynnwood to Everett Station, generally along I-5.
N-03	Edmonds Permanent Station	Commuter Rail	In conjunction with Washington State Ferries' Edmonds Crossing multimodal terminal project, this deferred project would relocate the interim station at Edmonds to a permanent location and expand parking. This project is dependent upon WSDOT implementing the unfunded Edmonds Crossing multimodal terminal project.
N-04	Infill Light Rail Station: 130th Street (Lynnwood Link)	Light Rail	This project would add an elevated station at I-5 and N 130th Street along the Lynnwood Link Extension corridor. The station was identified by the Sound Transit Board as a potential future station during the selection of the route, profile and stations for the Lynnwood Link Extension. Inclusion of this project in ST3 would provide funding for design and construction of the station.
N-05	Infill Light Rail Station: 220th Street (Lynnwood Link)	Light Rail	This project would add an elevated station at I-5 and 220th Street SW along the Lynnwood Link Extension corridor. The station was identified by the Sound Transit Board as a potential future station during selection of the route, profile and stations for the Lynnwood Link Extension. Inclusion of this project in ST3 would provide funding for design and construction of the station.
P-03	HCT Study: Access and connection on NE 145th Street from State Route 522 to Link Light Rail	Other	This study would examine options to provide improved east-west connections along NE 145th Street for communities and jurisdictions along State Route 522 to Link light rail. The study would be completed to examine a variety of options for service provision, and to maximize opportunities for regional integration.
P-04	HCT Study: Northern Lake Washington Crossing	Other	This study would examine options for expanding high-capacity transit connections across northern Lake Washington that may be needed when ridership demand exceeds available capacity. This study would examine alternatives including and parallel to State Route 522 and State Route 520, including connections from Sand Point to Kirkland and Redmond/and or Bellevue. The study would be completed to examine a variety of options for service provision, and to maximize opportunities for regional integration.
<b>CENTRAL CORRIDOR</b>			
C-01a	Downtown Seattle to Ballard (Market Street vicinity), primarily at-grade along Elliott and 15th Avenue	Light Rail	This project would build light rail from downtown Seattle to Ballard's Market Street area via the Uptown neighborhood. It would include a movable bridge over the Ship Canal and at-grade light rail in exclusive lanes on 15th Avenue NW and Elliott Avenue W, with signal priority so trains would generally stop only at stations.
C-01b	Downtown Seattle to Ballard (Market Street vicinity), primarily elevated along Elliott and 15th Avenue with tunnel options	Light Rail	This project would build light rail from downtown Seattle to Ballard's Market Street area. It would include primarily elevated light rail on 15th Avenue NW and Elliott Avenue W and a movable bridge over the Ship Canal. It could include tunnel options through the Uptown neighborhood into downtown Seattle.
C-01c	Downtown Seattle to Ballard (Market Street vicinity), primarily elevated/tunnel options	Light Rail	This project would provide light rail from downtown Seattle to Ballard's Market Street area. It would include primarily elevated light rail along the west side of the Interbay corridor and would cross the Ship Canal with either a movable bridge or tunnel.
C-01d	Downtown Seattle to Ballard (Market Street vicinity), primarily at-grade along Westlake Avenue	Light Rail	This project would build light rail from downtown Seattle to Ballard's Market Street area via Westlake Avenue and serve South Lake Union and Fremont. It would be built at-grade in exclusive lanes with signal priority. It could use a movable bridge or tunnel to cross the Ship Canal.
C-02	Ballard to University District	Light Rail	This project would build light rail in a tunnel from Ballard's Market Street area to the vicinity of the U District light rail station now under construction. Riders wishing to continue north or south on Link would transfer at that station.
C-03a	Downtown Seattle to West Seattle/Junction, elevated	Light Rail	This project would build light rail from downtown Seattle, over the existing West Seattle Bridge or a new bridge crossing, to West Seattle's Alaska Junction in a primarily elevated profile.
C-03b	Downtown Seattle to West Seattle/Junction, at-grade	Light Rail	This project would build light rail from downtown Seattle, over the existing West Seattle Bridge, to West Seattle's Alaska Junction in a primarily at-grade profile.
C-03c	Downtown Seattle to Delridge/White Center	Light Rail	This project would build light rail from downtown Seattle, on a new, low-level bridge crossing the Duwamish River, to White Center via Delridge with at-grade and elevated sections.
C-04	New Downtown Seattle Light Rail Tunnel Connection	Light Rail	This project would connect Ballard and West Seattle light rail extensions by building a new tunnel through downtown Seattle.
C-05	New Downtown Seattle Light Rail Surface Connection: At-grade	Light Rail	This project would connect Ballard and West Seattle light rail extensions by building a new at-grade light rail connection through downtown Seattle.
C-06	Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel existing station passenger capacity improvements	Light Rail	This project would improve passenger circulation and provide additional passenger capacity in existing Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel stations as the regional transit system expands. It will examine the access-egress needs and identify, design, and construct improvements.
C-07	Transit Tunnel (International District to Northgate) improvements enabling increases in system frequency	Light Rail	This project would study, identify, and evaluate capital and operating options in the Transit Tunnel (International District to Northgate) to potentially improve the frequency of trains to less than three minutes. This could include funding projects such as train operations, upgraded train control signal technology, ventilation, access/egress improvements, etc.
C-08	Infill Light Rail Station: Graham Street	Light Rail	This project would add an at-grade station on Link light rail in the vicinity of Graham Street/Eddy Street.
C-09	Infill Light Rail station: Boeing Access Road	Light Rail	This project would add an elevated Link light rail station in the vicinity of Boeing Access Road.
C-10	Infill Sounder Station: Boeing Access Road	Commuter Rail	This project would add a commuter rail station to the existing South Sounder service in the vicinity of Boeing Access Road along the BNSF tracks.

NO.	PROJECT NAME	MODE	DESCRIPTION
C-11	Madison Street BRT	Bus Rapid Transit	This project would connect the Colman Dock area in downtown Seattle with First Hill, Capitol Hill and the Central District using buses in exclusive lanes with signal priority and other features that improve passenger capacity and travel times.
<b>EAST CORRIDOR</b>			
E-01	Overlake Transit Center to SE Redmond to Downtown Redmond (East Link)	Light Rail	This project would extend East Link to downtown Redmond, as addressed in the project's Record of Decision. The project would include stations at SE Redmond and downtown Redmond.
E-03	Totem Lake to Issaquah via Bellevue	Light Rail	This project would build light rail from Totem Lake to the East Link Hospital Station in Bellevue with some sections at-grade and other sections elevated, utilizing the Eastside Rail Corridor. It would continue to downtown Issaquah generally following the I-90 corridor.
E-04	Renton HOV Direct Access/N 8th	Bus	This is a deferred project that would build a new direct access ramp at N 8th Street in Renton. It was to be designed and built in conjunction with WSDOT's I-405 widening project between Bellevue and Tukwila, which has not been funded by the state.
P-02	HCT Study: Issaquah Highlands to Overlake via Sammamish, Redmond	Other	This study would examine potential future upgrades in existing service and/or improved connections along the corridor from Issaquah Highlands to Overlake via Sammamish/Redmond. The study would be completed in coordination with local transit partners to examine a variety of options for service provision, and to maximize opportunities for regional integration.
<b>SOUTH CORRIDOR</b>			
S-01	Kent/Des Moines to Redondo/Star Lake (272nd) (Federal Way Link)	Light Rail	This deferred project would extend light rail from the Kent/Des Moines station to Redondo/Star Lake (in the vicinity of South 272nd Street) per the Record of Decision that will be completed as part of Federal Way Link Extension.
S-02	Redondo/Star Lake (272nd) to Federal Way (Federal Way Link)	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail south from Redondo/Star Lake (South 272nd Street) to the Federal Way Transit Center area per the Record of Decision that will be completed as part of Federal Way Link Extension.
S-03	Federal Way to Tacoma Dome Station via I-5	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail from the Federal Way Transit Center area to Tacoma Dome Station. This option would generally follow I-5 primarily on an elevated structure or on a mix of elevated and at-grade sections.
S-04	Federal Way to Tacoma Dome Station via 99	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail from the Federal Way Transit Center area to Tacoma Dome Station generally following SR 99 in a primarily elevated profile or with a mix of elevated and at-grade sections.
S-05	Tacoma Dome Station to Tacoma Mall	Light Rail	This project would extend light rail from the Tacoma Dome Station to a station in the vicinity of the Tacoma Mall.
S-06	Expand Sounder South Train Platforms to 8 cars	Commuter Rail	This deferred project would expand the capacity of south Sounder commuter rail service by extending the existing station platforms to accommodate 8-car trains.
S-07	Additional South Sounder platform extensions (Beyond 8-car extension included in S-06)	Commuter Rail	This project would extend south Sounder station platforms beyond 8-car trains to increase passenger capacity. (Note: Project S-06 would extend platforms to eight cars.)
S-08	Additional South Sounder service	Commuter Rail	This project would increase south Sounder service beyond levels funded under the Sound Move and ST2 ballot measures through operating and capital improvements.
S-09	Auburn Station access improvements	Commuter Rail	This deferred project would improve access to and from the Auburn Sounder Station. Improvements could include on or off-site parking improvements or other strategies such as pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements.
S-10	Kent Station access improvements	Commuter Rail	This deferred project would improve access to and from the Kent Sounder Station. Improvements could include on or off-site parking improvements or other strategies such as pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements.
S-11	Tacoma Link Extension	Light Rail	Tacoma Link extension to Tacoma Community College
<b>REGIONWIDE/MULTI-CORRIDOR</b>			
E-02	I-405 BRT: Lynnwood to SeaTac in HOV/managed lanes <i>(North, East and South corridors)</i>	Bus Rapid Transit	This project would establish Bus Rapid Transit that would operate primarily in HOV/managed lanes from Lynnwood to SeaTac/Airport Station via I-405, SR 518, and International Boulevard. Potential improvements include direct access ramps to facilitate the movement of buses, as well as parking, freeway stations and station improvements.
P-01	Future System Planning (ST4)	Other	This project would include funds for planning efforts supporting an eventual Sound Transit 4 ballot measure that continues progress toward implementing Sound Transit's Long-Range Plan.
R-01	ST Express Service	Express Bus	This project would fund capital and operating improvements for ST Express regional bus service supporting the high-capacity transit extensions that are selected for the Sound Transit 3 measure.
R-02	Vehicle Purchases	Other	This project would fund expanding the Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail, and ST Express bus fleets as the regional transit system grows.
R-03	Maintenance and Storage Facilities	Other	This project would add maintenance and storage facilities for the Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail and ST Express bus fleets to support system expansion.
R-04	System Repair and Enhancement	Other	Under this program, investments necessary to maintain and operate an expanded regional transit system would be identified and funded. A potential project list is under development and review by Sound Transit staff.
R-05	System Access Program (ped, bike and parking)	Other	This project would fund planning and implementation of investments to improve access to the regional transit system, including improvements for pedestrians, bicyclists, buses and private vehicles. Funds would be prioritized per Sound Transit's System Access Policy.
R-06	Innovation and Technology Program	Other	This program would fund planning and implementation of programs outside the scope of large capital projects, which can improve the functioning and use of the regional transit system through innovative best practices, technologies and partnerships.
R-07	Transit Oriented Development Program	Other	Program to fund additional TOD analysis and support conducted as part of project development in accordance with the TOD Policy (Resolution No. R2012-14). Funding could be used for activities such as planning, detailed market studies, analysis of potential Agency TOD sites and related activities necessary to bring surplus properties to the market, and both Community and Agency TOD development support.
R-08	Agency administration, insurance and reserves	Other	Beyond investments in individual projects, implementing the ST3 program will require agency-wide capital and operating programs including: - Insurance for capital and operating programs, - Bond, capital replacement, operating and other reserves, - Staffing and other administrative costs to implement the ST3 program.



## City of Tacoma

Council Member Robert S. Thoms

---

July 14, 2015

Dear Mayor, Tacoma Planning Commission members and City Council Colleagues:

I am writing you to share my thoughts, concerns and potential opportunities related to the Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) and the Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group proposal for an affordable housing pilot project.

I have had several meetings with residents of the North Slope Historical District (NSHD) and others who have shared several insights to the important efforts made in the NSHD over the last decade and several concerns with the pilot project and potential consequences to the exact gains this pilot seeks that have been made in the NSHD.

Currently, the historic district overlay and the HMR-SRD zoning category that was created just a decade ago to support investment and density in this neighborhood have been successful and work together to protect the historic district. As proposed, the pilot program could weaken these protections in this neighborhood that has been able to provide greater density and continues to have affordable housing in Tacoma. The data and growth and investment in the NSHD have seen exactly the type of density that the Planning Department and the Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group envisioned. The pilot's intent is not my concern; I believe the pilot is a valuable step forward especially for chronically less dense areas of the city. However, NSHD is already meeting and exceeding current and the proposed pilot project goals.

I would like to see as the public comments come in on this pilot proposal we have City Staff and Commission members work closely to ensure we are respecting the areas that are performing well and provide the necessary flexibility to incorporate the tools they have employed to achieve these lofty and very necessary goals. I believe we can find a way to ensure the pilot program builds upon the successful efforts of neighborhoods like the NSHD.

I understand the NSHD is eager to work with PDS Staff, the Planning Commission and the City to ensure goals are attained and be a major partner in the full implementation of a permanent

policy. The NSHD has overcome many challenging issues to allow the neighborhood to transcend decades of neglect and encroachment by neighboring downzoned areas in order for it to be as successful as it is today. How, they did it as a neighborhood; as a result of wanting to have more residents and more housing options. The district was successful well before this pilot program was developed. I respect their hard work, I trust their interest in being a part of future long term policies to achieve these laudable goals and I know first-hand how hard they will work and their commitment to Tacoma.

In closing, I look forward to the public comment period and I know we can incorporate tried and true techniques that respect the nuances of our historic districts and neighborhoods that have been successful to date on the very goals the pilot program seeks.

Sincerely,



Robert S. Thoms  
City Councilman, Dist 2  
City of Tacoma

Cc: TC Broadnax, City Manager  
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services  
Brian Boudet, Division Manager, Planning and Development Services