



ORDINANCE NO. 28193

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to community and economic development; adopting the
2 South Downtown Subarea Plan as an element of the City's Comprehensive
3 Plan.

4 WHEREAS the City of Tacoma was selected to participate in the U.S.
5 Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Regional
6 Planning Grant Program, and

7 WHEREAS the Grant program is a three-year, \$5 million grant dedicated
8 towards a 'Growing Transit Communities' program coordinated by the Puget Sound
9 Regional Council ("PSRC") which aims to: (1) support local efforts throughout the
10 region to promote socially equitable transit-oriented development; (2) focus new job
11 and housing growth in the vicinity of new high-capacity transit systems; (3) put jobs
12 and opportunity closer to where people live; and (4) sustain a healthy environment and
13 a healthy economy in the decades to come, and

14 WHEREAS, the City of Tacoma, as a Puget Sound Regional Council Catalyst
15 Project partner, has received the sum of \$500,000 to develop a long-range Subarea
16 Plan and area-wide SEPA Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS") addressing future
17 development standards and incentives and coordinated infrastructure investments in
18 South Downtown, and

19 WHEREAS the South Downtown Subarea Plan and EIS area encompasses
20 600 acres of historic industrial and commercial land in the southern half of Tacoma's
21 downtown and includes five distinct districts: (1) Dome District; (2) Brewery District;
22 (3) UWT/Museum District; (4) Thea Foss Waterway and Shoreline; and (5) Hillside
23 District, and
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1 WHEREAS the Subarea has a diversely built environment, including
2 approximately 100 historic properties, but is also characterized by a relatively high
3 concentration of underutilized land and buildings, and
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5 WHEREAS the unique characteristics of the area represent an unmatched
6 opportunity to absorb growth and transform into a transit-oriented community which is
7 expected to absorb more than 30,000 new residents and 40,000 new jobs over the
8 next twenty years, and

9 WHEREAS broad goals of the project include: (1) pre-approving up to 30
10 million square feet of new development space through the SEPA process;
11 (2) streamlining development regulations; (3) prioritization of transportation
12 investments; (4) identifying and prioritizing necessary infrastructure improvements; (5)
13 planning for parks, trails, and open space; and (6) identification of potential funding
14 strategies, and
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16 WHEREAS on August 28, 2013, the City of Tacoma and the University of
17 Washington, as co-lead agencies, issued a non-project EIS for the South Downtown
18 Subarea Plan, and
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20 WHEREAS a non-project EIS involves a cumulative environmental impact and
21 mitigation analysis for the entire Subarea, rather than piecemeal analysis on a project-
22 by-project basis, and

23 WHEREAS the non-project EIS eliminates the need for subsequent
24 environmental review associated with project-specific development proposals that
25 comply with the Subarea Plan's development regulations relevant to the proposed
26 project, and



1 WHEREAS the non-project EIS provides a developer with certainty and
2 predictability, thereby eliminating duplicative environmental review at the project level
3 and furthering the goals of the State Environmental Policy Act ("SEPA") and the
4 Growth Management Act ("GMA"), and

5
6 WHEREAS the co-lead agencies prepared a non-project EIS pursuant to RCW
7 43.21C.420, known as "Transit Infill Review," and the co-lead agencies completed the
8 planning and environmental review of this subarea plan EIS in conformance with the
9 statutory requirements of RCW 43.21C.420 and the Tacoma Municipal Code ("TMC"),
10 and

11 WHEREAS given the "sunset" provision of RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b), the
12 co-lead agencies also complied with RCW 43.21C.031 and RCW 43.21C.440
13 (planned action) and RCW 43.21C.229 (infill exemption), to provide additional SEPA
14 authority to facilitate and expedite the development contemplated in the subarea plan
15 if the appeal-related provisions in RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b) expire, and

16
17 WHEREAS for a non-project EIS completed under RCW 43.21C.420, the
18 SEPA-based appeal opportunity occurs in conjunction with the adoption of the
19 subarea plan, and WHEREAS there are no SEPA noticing requirements for
20 subsequent, site-specific development or redevelopment projects that are consistent
21 with the subarea plan and development regulations, and

22
23 WHEREAS consistent with RCW 43.21C.420, a proposed development will not
24 be subject to project-specific SEPA-based administrative or judicial appeals if the
25 proposed development is: (1) proposed within 10 (ten) years of the issuance of the
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1 subarea Final EIS; (2) situated within the subarea; and (3) consistent with the adopted
2 subarea plan and development regulations, and

3 WHEREAS the EIS acknowledges that there will be sufficient utility
4 infrastructure, transportation capacity, and open space to serve anticipated growth, for
5 the next five to ten years, and

6 Whereas the EIS sets forth monitoring protocols and tiered thresholds of
7 development that would trigger a suite of mitigation measures to provide for sufficient
8 infrastructure within the subarea, and

9 WHEREAS public notification for the Subarea Plan and EIS was provided
10 jointly throughout the project and included an initial Community Meeting on
11 December 1, 2011; an initial Scoping Meeting held on December 15, 2011; and notice
12 of the issuance of the draft Subarea Plan, draft EIS, and notice of the subsequent
13 Public Hearing on April 25, 2013, and

14 WHEREAS a notice of availability was mailed upon issuance of the final EIS
15 and included notice of the draft Subarea Plan Planning Commission Public Hearing
16 held on September 18, 2013, and

17 WHEREAS the Planning Commission concluded that, as proposed, the South
18 Downtown Subarea Plan and EIS are consistent with the Comprehensive plan with a
19 preliminary maximum build-out target of 20 million square feet of new development,
20 and
21 and

22 WHEREAS the Planning Commission recommended that the City Council
23 adopt the draft South Downtown Subarea Plan as a new element of the
24 Comprehensive Plan and adopt the proposed amendments to the TMC Chapters
25 13.06 Zoning and 13.06A Downtown Tacoma, and
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1 WHEREAS the recommended actions are presented in two separate
2 ordinances for ease of review, consisting of this ordinance to amend the
3 Comprehensive Plan with the addition of the South Downtown Subarea Plan and a
4 separate ordinance to amend TMC Chapters 13.06 and 13.06A to implement the
5 Subarea Plan, and
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7 WHEREAS Chapter 13.02 of the TMC details the procedures and criteria for
8 amending the Plan, including review of potential amendments by the Commission and
9 City staff, and the requirement that potential amendments be subject to a public review
10 process, and
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12 WHEREAS, considering the public testimony received at a hearing on
13 September 18, 2013, together with analyses and assessments completed by City
14 staff, the Commission developed proposed amendments to the Plan, which were
15 compiled in the Planning Commission's Findings and Recommendations Report
16 forwarded to the City Council on November 6, 2013, and
17

18 WHEREAS the proposed amendments to the Plan conform to the requirements
19 of the GMA, and were developed and are consistent with the following: (1) the State
20 Environmental Policy Act; (2) VISION 2040, the growth management, environmental,
21 economic, and transportation vision for the Central Puget Sound region;
22 (3) Transportation 2040, the action plan for transportation in the Central Puget Sound
23 region; (4) the Countywide Planning Policies for Pierce County; (5) Substitute
24 Resolution No. 37070, which provides guiding principles for the City's future growth;
25 and (6) TMC Chapter 13.02, and
26



1 WHEREAS pursuant to TMC Chapter 13.02, the City Council is required to
2 conduct a public hearing prior to consideration for adoption, and

3 WHEREAS the City Council conducted a public hearing on the Planning
4 Commission's recommendations on December 3, 2013, and

5 WHEREAS the effective date of the ordinance for the South Downtown
6 Subarea and Comprehensive Plan adoption shall be January 1, 2014; Now, Therefore,
7

8 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:

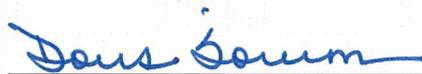
9 Section 1. That the City Council adopts the Findings and Recommendations of
10 the Planning Commission, dated November 6, 2013.

11 Section 2. That the City of Tacoma Comprehensive Plan is hereby amended
12 with the addition of the South Downtown Subarea Plan as set forth in the attached
13 Exhibit "A."
14

15 Adopted DEC 17 2013

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18 _____
Mayor

19 Attest:

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21 _____
City Clerk

22 Approved as to form:

23 
24 _____
Deputy City Attorney

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