



## **AGENDA**

**MEETING:** Regular Meeting

**TIME:** Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 4:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

### **A. Call to Order and Quorum Call**

### **B. Approval of Agenda and Minutes of October 19, 2016 and November 2, 2016**

**C. Public Comments** (up to three minutes per speaker; must be pertaining to items on the agenda)

### **D. Discussion Items**

#### **1. Dialogue with the Neighborhood Councils – North End**

Representatives from the North End Neighborhood Council will share with the Planning Commission their issues, concerns, needs and priorities.  
(Staff Contact: Lihuang Wung, 591-5682, [lwung@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:lwung@cityoftacoma.org))

#### **2. Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan**

Review the status of the project, focusing on the proposed street network and key issues related to connectivity.  
(See "Agenda Item D-2"; Elliott Barnett, 591-5389, [elliott.barnett@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:elliott.barnett@cityoftacoma.org))

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

- (1) *Safe Routes to School Open House*, November 16, 2016, 5:00-7:00 p.m., Lincoln High School  
(See "Agenda Item E-1" flyer)
- (2) *Commercial Project Report* is now available on [www.TacomaPermits.org](http://www.TacomaPermits.org) (See "Agenda Item E-2")
- (3) Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting on November 23, 2016 has been canceled. The next meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2016, agenda including: Landmarks Preservation Committee Interviews, Master Mobility Plan Update, and Commute Trip Reduction.
- (4) Planning Commission meeting, December 7, 2016, 4:00 p.m., Room 16; agenda includes: Dialogue with the Neighborhood Councils – Northeast Tacoma; Capital Facilities Program 2017-2022 Update; Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan; and Billboards Regulations.

### **F. Adjournment**







## **MINUTES** (Draft)

**TIME:** Wednesday, October 19, 2016, 4:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North  
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Stephen Wamback (Vice-Chair), Meredith Neal, Anna Petersen, Brett Santhuff  
Dorian Waller, Scott Winship, Jeremy Woolley  
**ABSENT:** Chris Beale (Chair), Jeff McInnis

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

Vice-Chair Wamback called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. A quorum was declared.

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

The agenda was approved.

### **C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No members of the public came forward to provide comments.

### **D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **1. Dialogue with the Neighborhood Councils – South Tacoma**

Pennie Smith and Beverly Bowen-Bennett from the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council had a discussion with the Planning Commission regarding their issues, concerns, needs, and priorities. Ms. Smith reviewed that she was currently the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council Chair. Ms. Bowen-Bennett noted that she had been on the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council since January 2016. Commissioners introduced themselves noting which positions they represent and what part of Tacoma they are from. The role and purpose of the Planning Commission was reviewed.

Ms. Smith noted that while they represent all of South Tacoma, they worked on the side of neighborhoods. She reported that they were concerned that construction was happening even though it seemed that space was short in the Tacoma Mall subarea. She asked how building proposals were approved, what constituted a private alley, and how a specific property became accessible only through an easement. Vice-Chair Wamback reported that current development proposals were handled by a separate group of staff and that permit decisions do not come before the Commission.

Ms. Bowen-Bennett commented that she was concerned about how much building was going on, though no one has started building anything in Lincoln Heights. She noted that she lived in the Madison Neighborhood, expressing support for having the former elementary school become a park, community center, or school again. She added that the only park in the 600 acre area was the Lincoln Heights park, noting that they had held an event in that park and were planning another. Ms. Bowen-Bennett asked if there had been any consideration for Lincoln Heights as a historic area. Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division, responded that he hadn't heard anyone suggested that Lincoln Heights should become formally historic. He noted that in the subarea plan they were proposing keeping the area residential while having it zoned for higher density.

Ms. Bowen-Bennett commented that she wished they could have a moratorium on building until they have the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan approved, because it seemed like every week ground was being broken

for a structure that would not be considered appropriate in the plan. She noted that one of the neighborhood council's concerns was that they didn't hear about anything until it has already happened.

Ms. Bowen-Bennett asked how citizens can impact the decisions made by the Planning Commission. Vice-Chair Wamback responded that by attending stakeholder meetings they were already involved in the process. He noted that they also had a public comment item at each meeting and could discuss any item from the meeting agenda that it had not already gone through the public hearing process.

Commissioner Santhuff commented that the south Tacoma business district was important to the neighborhood council, expressing interest in their feedback on how the current regulations were structured and if it meets the vision of the neighbors of that business district. Ms. Bowen-Bennett responded that a member of the board had reported that the South Tacoma Business District did not have communication with the businesses involved in the subarea plan.

Commissioner Santhuff commented it was important to be aware of the current zoning and development rights compared to what was there currently. He added that the area had many historic buildings which are not protected and that it would be a good area for a neighborhood council to be engaged with their vision for future development.

Vice-Chair Wamback noted the challenges associated with accommodating growth in the City, reviewing that it had been important to them to protect and preserve the existing lower density single family areas. He commented that they needed input from the public on how they can preserve those single family neighborhoods while still finding a place to accommodate growth. He added that there was also the challenge of how they plan higher density so it fits into the existing character and provides quality places for people to live. Ms. Bowen-Bennett commented that she shared the concern that the new high density construction was not quality. She asked that if they could put one thing on the plan it would be that homes can't be constructed with the front door on the alley.

## **2. Urban Design Studio**

Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division Manager, reviewed that they were continuing a process that had started in 2007 with community and stakeholder conversations about what an urban design program might look like. He commented that they wanted there to be a new community conversation, but also to capture the outreach that had already occurred. Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, noted that they had contracted with Makers Architecture and Urban Design in part because they think about the programmatic element, how to administer design review programs, and the value that it can add.

Bob Bengford, Makers Architecture and Urban Design, reviewed that in 2006 and 2008 they had done a lot of outreach and spoken with many other cities. When they were asked to reengage on the project they had looked at their previous report and found that many of the recommendations still apply, but they also took the opportunity to go back and document the issues with design review in other communities. Mr. Bengford reviewed that currently in many jurisdictions design standards are codified, while in other jurisdictions half of the standards are in code and half are adopted by reference outside of the code. He added that there are unique opportunities or constraints based on whether design provisions are codified or freestanding. He noted examples from Boise, Ellensburg, and the City of Redmond.

Mr. Bengford discussed whether to focus on specificity or flexibility in design standards, noting that Tacoma's current design standards were very prescriptive while other cities were typically more flexible. Commissioner Winship asked if there was a preference among the developers. Mr. Bengford responded that the developers want both predictability and flexibility, but the best approach was to have clear minimum standards with integrated opportunities for flexibility. This could be done through a toolbox approach or by having departure provisions. He noted that in Redmond one could essentially do departure on anything, then they allowed administrative design flexibility if it would create a better project.

Mr. Bengford noted a typical example of how the design provisions were organized. He added that on their projects they usually prioritize the frontages and then get into the site design elements, service elements, and the building design later. He commented that as they updated design provision they would need to look at the gaps concerning areas, zones and types of development; individual site and building design issues; and issues specific to Tacoma. They would also need to find the balance of specificity and

flexibility right for Tacoma. Mr. Bengford discussed the importance of graphics, which could also illustrate many types of development as well as examples of what they don't want to see. The last step to updating the design provisions would be to update the standards and guidelines to meet design objectives.

Mr. Bengford reviewed that at the stakeholder meetings from 2008 they had heard that the time was right for design review; that clear intent statements were important; the need to focus on critical design issues; that context is important; that options for developers and stakeholders shouldn't be too onerous, but also meet the vision; the need for a balance of prescription and flexibility; and that the process be workable and predictable.

Design review was discussed. Mr. Bengford reviewed that they currently have administrative review but another option would be having a citywide design review board. He suggested that if they were going to have a design review board they would want to make sure they have the appropriate staffing and that the review would be timely. Mr. Bengford suggested options to be considered for applicability including design review for all commercial and multifamily development; requiring it only for projects that do a departure; requiring it for projects receiving a height bonus; requiring it for specific areas or zones; or looking at bigger projects only. He recommended looking at the permit history to determine feasibility. Mr. Bengford noted that design review can provide an extra opportunity for public comment, even if the review is handled administratively.

Mr. Atkinson discussed costs and fees. He reviewed that they had requested money in the budget for one full time employee, an intern, and the professional services needed for the process, development, and design of the code. He added that the budget was a reasonable starting point that they could build on in the future. Mr. Bengford reported that they had looked into how other cities structure their costs, finding that some of them used fixed costs and others used hours spent.

Mr. Bengford commented that if they end up with a good set of design standards and guidelines it can have a number of effects including setting a clear expectation for design for the applicants and community members; providing a balance of predictability and flexibility; facilitating better public involvement in the development process; and facilitating better communication between the reviewer and the applicant.

Mr. Atkinson commented that it would be helpful to start with some basic concepts. He noted that there is administrative design review being done currently through their code and permit processes and that there would need to be updates to standards and codes regardless of whether or not they had a design review board. He commented that they did not have the staff resources to open the design review board up to everything. He added that it made sense to think about improving existing processes and to strengthen and expand staff expertise in house whether or not there is a design review board.

Lauren Flemister, Planning Services Division, commented that if they received budget approval they would need to take a number of steps to get the program up and running. Public outreach, including outreach to the Master Builders Association, the American Institute of Architects, and the Neighborhood Councils, would be important for understanding how the market would play to the concept and what they would need to do to encourage positive departure. During the code audit phase they would consider the gaps and errors in the code, how to make it more usable for public and staff, and whether it would be embedded in the code or freestanding. Scoping would happen once they had feedback from the public. It would also be important to consider how it would impact existing staff in permitting.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

- Commissioner Neal asked what scale of multifamily other jurisdictions were considering, noting that many fourplexes in an area can change the character. Mr. Bengford responded that they could have different standards for different housing types or specific to those types. Ms. Flemister commented that they could expand to different housing types or areas over time.
- Commissioner Neal asked if it would be only for large developments or if it would also be for single family and duplexes. Mr. Atkinson noted that there were design standards in place for single family and duplexes in some cases and they would need to evaluate whether those standards were working.

- Commissioner Petersen commented that they should have clear guidelines on what goes through the staff review as opposed to what goes to the design review board. She suggested they allow for smaller flexibilities without moving projects up to the design review board level.
- Commissioner Petersen commented that having a staff member with planning and design expertise would not be necessary and that any planner could be able to do it. Ms. Flemister responded that having an architecture background would be necessary for some of the discussions to get the best outcome.
- Commissioner Petersen reported that she had worked in jurisdictions that had a set fee and jurisdictions that billed hourly. She had observed that it requires extra time from more than just planning staff, noting that plans examiners and engineering staff would have to spend extra time on design issues especially if the applicant hadn't submitted a fully thought out project.
- Commissioner Winship suggested that the process include an assessment of how it is working to ensure that the objectives are being met.
- Commissioner Santhuff asked if the infill housing pilot program, which had included design guidelines and a review board, would influence this project. Mr. Boudet confirmed that it would.
- Commissioner Santhuff asked if any jurisdictions structured their design review boards by scale or type of project, with different compositions of membership for different kinds of development. Mr. Atkinson responded that he wasn't aware of any jurisdictions that structure their design review boards in that manner but it was something that they could investigate.
- Vice-Chair Wamback suggested that they ask the City Council to authorize the Planning Commission to form an advisory committee with outside members that would work with staff and report to the Commission periodically during the public process. The committee could be there for the development of the program and then for the next 18 months to review how it's going.
- Vice-Chair Wamback commented that he had seen design review boards that work, but also some boards that are very anti-development and focused on preserving character.

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

Commissioners provided the following suggestions for future meetings with Neighborhood Council representatives:

- Vice-Chair Wamback suggested that it would be helpful to invite Neighborhood Council members to discuss their area and provide a map showing the district boundaries.
- Vice-Chair Wamback suggested having them discuss 3 things they like and 3 things they dislike about the urban design of their neighborhood.
- Commissioner Neal suggested including a question on where they see the center of their neighborhood.
- Commissioner Neal suggested providing a one page summary on what the Planning Commission does and another on how to get involved in the planning process.

Mr. Boudet provided the following updates:

- Invites had been sent to Commissioners to schedule lunch meetings over the next few months, providing an opportunity for a one on one discussion with Planning staff.
- The third presentation of Conversations Regarding Tacoma would be on November 10.
- Billboards were a possible item for the agenda of the next meeting. The discussion would likely focus on the status of the standstill agreement and discussions with Lamar Advertising.

Commissioner Woolley noted that there would be a Historic Tacoma meeting on November 10 with topics including historic preservation and adaptive reuse.

#### **F. ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:17 p.m., the meeting of the Planning Commission was concluded.



## **MINUTES** (Draft)

**TIME:** Wednesday, November 2, 2016, 4:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North  
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Chris Beale (Chair), Stephen Wamback (Vice-Chair), Meredith Neal, Anna Petersen,  
Scott Winship, Jeremy Woolley  
**ABSENT:** Jeff McInnis, Brett Santhuff, Dorian Waller

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

Chair Beale called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. A quorum was declared.

### **B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES OF OCTOBER 5, 2016**

The agenda was approved. The minutes of the regular meeting on October 5, 2016 were reviewed. Commissioner Neal noted that she had made a suggestion that the City provide a one page report reflecting what the Commission does. The minutes were approved as amended. It was later noted by staff that the suggestion from Commissioner Neal had actually been made at the October 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Commission acknowledged that the minutes of October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as submitted.

### **C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No members of the public came forward to provide comments.

### **D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **1. Pierce Transit Update**

Darin Stavish, Pierce Transit Principal Planner, provided a briefing on the recently adopted long-range transit plan, *Destination 2040*. He reported that they had internally developed three hypothetical fixed route transit network scenarios for incremental growth, and another for a potential worst case reduction in services. Mr. Stavish reviewed that their growth scenarios ranged from 2% incremental to 3% aspirational annual growth which would take them from 450,000 annual service hours to 900,000 service hours by 2040. He reported that they took into account a customer survey that had called for greater frequency, a longer service span, and improved night and weekend service. They would also connect directly to Sound Transit once the Tacoma Link light rail and Central Link extension locations were determined.

Mr. Stavish discussed growth scenario 2 which would put them at 725,000 annual service hours by 2040. He noted that scenario 2 would leave the route structure mostly unmodified, while restoring evening and weekend service. Some of the guidelines they followed when creating the growth scenarios included that density is a strong predictor of ridership, the route network should facilitate access to as much of the Public Transportation Benefit Area as practical, and routes should be anchored by major destinations at both ends. He noted that in this scenario they had added a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service operating between Downtown Tacoma and Spanaway. They were also doing a high capacity transit study and alternatives analysis for the 14 mile corridor. In all scenarios they would make slight route adjustments to accommodate the Tacoma Link extension.

Mr. Stavish discussed the 3% growth scenario, which was based on high growth and transit service hours, expanded or new routes, and unlimited funding availability. The scenario would put them at about 930,000 service hours by 2040. He discussed a backbone network that was created for the South Sound

region that connects the major centers and served as a basis for the high frequency routes of 15 minutes or less that connect to the proposed Central Link extension. Opportunities for growth that were considered in the plan included evaluating transit dependent population areas; coordinated planning for targeted infill areas such as the Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea plan; studying the Pacific Avenue/State Route 7 corridor for a new higher capacity BRT service; emerging technologies; and ongoing integration with regional transit providers such as Sound Transit, King County Metro, and Intercity Transit.

Mr. Stavish noted that their most direct planning partners were the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), Metropolitan Planning Organization, Sound Transit, and King County Metro. As other agencies' plans were finalized in 2016-2017 the individual recommendations and measures for growth in transit services would be utilized by the PSRC as they began updating their own plan in 2017.

Commissioners provided the following comments and questions:

- Vice-Chair Wamback asked if the plan would allow for more opportunities like the Ruston trolley. Peter Stackpole, Pierce Transit, responded that the long-range plan does budget for partnerships like the Ruston Trolley and similar services that might not meet their regular service standards.
- Chair Beale asked how Sound Transit's decision to extend the Tacoma Link light rail to Tacoma Community College instead of the Tacoma Mall had affected the long-range transit plan. Mr. Stavish responded that they were so far into the process that they had not altered the plan, but they can move to wherever Sound Transit is.
- Chair Beale asked if the long-range transit plan discussed funding sources. Mr. Stavish responded that it didn't go into funding sources, but did consider costs for each of the scenarios.

The 2016 Route Analysis of Pierce Transit's existing bus service was discussed. Mr. Stackpole reviewed that when they were doing their budget for 2016, they had determined that they could put some 54,000 hours back into their service, which would be the first major service restoration since 2012. He noted that there had been changes in the service area, land use patterns, and customer needs since the last update, so they had hired a consultant to look at their system and had conducted a robust public outreach process. Jason Kennedy, Pierce Transit, reviewed that the consultant had looked at the current population and the future projections to see where the land use is, what the service is now, and what could be improved on in the future. The consultant had concluded that they had a strong dependence on transfers; that there was duplication of service; and that the span of services was inadequate for many of the trip types. The consultant had also interviewed the board and found that their top goal was to attract more discretionary riders and commuters. The top priorities of the public were for more frequent service and earlier/later service on weekdays.

The first alternative proposed was to maintain the existing route network to minimize impacts on existing customers. It would add 35,000 hours to the existing network and improve the weekday peak service. Mr. Kennedy discussed how the frequency of service would increase during peak and midday hours.

The second alternative would invest in frequency and span of service to boost convenience and ridership. It would restructure by simplifying service, reducing duplication, and improving peak and midday frequency on key routes. The 35,000 hours added would restructure the network to give all urban routes 30 minute peak and midday service. Route 402 would have 30 minute midday and peak service as well. All urban routes and routes 3 and 4 would have expanded hours of service through at least 10 p.m. Mr. Kennedy reviewed maps of the proposed system, noting routes that would be eliminated or consolidated.

Mr. Kennedy commented that Alternative 1 would maximize coverage while Alternative 2 would allow the network to operate later and more frequently. He noted that the recommendation of the consultant was for Alternative 2. He reviewed that they were still conducting public outreach and would be presenting feedback to the board on November 14. The board would be voting in December to choose between the alternatives and the service changes would be implemented on March 12, 2017.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

- Commissioner Neal asked if there would be any other access to the Ruston Way waterfront with the elimination of Route 13. Mr. Kennedy commented that only the seasonal trolley would directly serve the area.

- Vice-Chair Wamback asked if there was any route directly connecting north Tacoma to the Tacoma Mall. It was noted that there was no direct route and that the only way to reach the mall from north Tacoma would be to transfer Downtown.
- Chair Beale asked how much consideration they gave areas with higher levels of poverty or higher levels of racial diversity that could be served by transit including routes on the east side of the City. Mr. Stackpole responded that with the proposed changes to the east side they do a much better job of frequency and span of service. He added that anytime a route is eliminated, expanded, or has a change to more than 20% of its service hours they look at a half mile tract around the route to make sure they aren't adversely affecting those populations.
- Chair Beale asked if they had thought about increasing the frequency beyond 15 minutes on Route 1. Mr. Stackpole responded that with a ten minute frequency there would be bus bunching particularly on the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue portion of the route.
- Commissioner Petersen asked how much they consider non commuter ridership like people running errands and students. Mr. Stackpole commented that they would be increasing midday frequency and expanding hours until 10pm.
- Commissioner Neal asked if they looked at the spacing between routes for walkability. Mr. Kennedy responded that they had compared the impacts on walkability with the two alternatives, but with restructuring the network there would be some increases in walk distance.
- Commissioner Woolley asked if there was a chance of bringing back eliminated lines in the future with the 3% growth scenario. Mr. Stackpole responded that there was a larger philosophy guiding their system, which had originally been focused on timed transfers. He added that the ideal would be a service operating at a 10 minute frequency with on street transfers utilizing a grid system.

## 2. Institutional Campus Zoning Review

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, discussed the scope of work for the proposed changes to the zoning designation, development standards, and administrative procedures for major campus institutions. He reviewed that when they adopted the *One Tacoma* Comprehensive Plan in 2015 they had made a change to the land use designations to better represent some of the large institutional campuses and to address the disconnect between the intensities on the land use designation map and the intent. Mr. Atkinson reviewed that, through the Comprehensive Plan update, they had focused on the idea of campuses as locations with multiple buildings, larger sites, and a citywide or regional appeal. Policies in the Comprehensive Plan related to the institutional campus designation recognized that they provide important services, areas for community activity, workforce development resources, and large densities of employment; recognized that these are large uses with a large potential impact; and encouraged the development of long-range plans for major institutions.

The five paths to permitting for institutions were discussed with case studies. Mr. Atkinson reported that the first path was permitting outright with minimal notification. Tacoma Community College (TCC) was noted as an example within a mixed-use center that had been permitted outright through zoning. For the community this had resulted in little notification beyond SEPA notices. TCC had been subject to some building design standards because of its location in a mixed-use area, but there were no special use or design criteria.

The second path was through conditional use, with the Cheney Stadium area noted as a case study. Mr. Atkinson reviewed that in the Cheney area most large developments were approved through conditional use, which created challenges for getting offsite signs for the stadium. He commented that the basic issue was that the development standards were designed for the typical residential lots in the R-2 area. Another issue was that with a conditional use they were required to demonstrate a need for the use, which created issues with existing uses. The benefits of the conditional use option were enhanced public notification and flexibility on height.

The third path was through the conditional use master plan with the University of Puget Sound (UPS) noted as a case study. Mr. Atkinson reviewed that any use that is listed as a conditional use can use the conditional use master plan. He noted that the benefits included a longer timeframe for development and flexibility with development standards. With UPS this had resulted in a height increase at the core of the campus and limitations on the heights around the periphery.

The fourth path discussed was the hospital medical base zone (HMX) with St. Joseph Medical Center noted as an example. The base zoning defined the edge of the facility area and reduces the notification requirements, but also placed restrictions on uses not associated with hospitals to ensure land supply.

The fifth path was through a development regulation agreement, which is a legislative action that creates site specific zoning and use standards. Point Defiance was noted as the case study where it had been done as part of the Point Defiance Master Plan. The benefits included a longer time frame, enhanced notification, some additional criteria in the code, development standard flexibility, and predictability.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

- Vice-Chair Wamback suggested that more consistency was needed in how they deal with the edge of institutional campuses particularly in the HMX districts. He commented that with the proposals for the Allenmore campus, St. Joe's, and the Tacoma General/Group Health complex, there did not seem to be enough consideration for what was happening at the edge of those areas. He commented that a 1000 foot notification could help.
- Vice-Chair Wamback reported that a member of the community had expressed concern that the proposed changes were a shortcut to rezone the Port of Tacoma area. Mr. Boudet responded that the proposed changes did not have anything to do with rezoning of the port area as it wasn't an institutional campus.
- Vice-Chair Wamback commented that the properties on S. 35<sup>th</sup> St. and Pacific Ave. probably should not be zoned HMX any longer.
- Commissioner Neal reported that she had heard concerns from many citizens that they do not get enough notification and that people are not finding out about things until it is too late. She commented that she would like to see a 1000 foot notification radius and an extension of the comment period to 30 days. She suggested that they should also consider other ways to reach people such as a planning department Facebook page.
- Chair Beale noted that the conditional use permit master plan option provides use flexibility for larger sites while allowing for a land use permit that has some input. He commented that he was less concerned about the notification radius and more concerned about who actually approves the permit and that there is a public hearing involved.
- Commissioner Petersen commented that with Cheney Stadium and TCC, expanding the notification radius would not capture everyone in the community who might be interested in what is going on. Mr. Atkinson responded that the notification could play a role, but that publicly owned facilities like Cheney might deserve a more in depth public discussion.

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

Mr. Wung updated the Commission on the following items:

- The City Council would be moving the public comment segment of their November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting to next meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Commissioner Neal's correction to the minutes of October 5 concerned a conversation from the meeting of October 19 and the comment noted would be included in those minutes.

Mr. Boudet updated the Commission on the following items:

- The City Council had held a public hearing on the 2017-2018 Biennial Budget on November 1, with no significant changes. The first reading of the budget was scheduled for November 15.
- At the last meeting of the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee, they had discussed Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and the LCLIP program. Forterra had provided a presentation on what LCLIP is and there had been interest in looking at TDR bonus incentives.
- The third presentation of the *Conversations RE: Tacoma* lecture series would be on November 10.

## **F. ADJOURNMENT**

At 5:44 p.m., the meeting of the Planning Commission was concluded.



City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item  
D-2**

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan and EIS**  
**Meeting Date:** November 16, 2016  
**Memo Date:** November 9, 2016

At the November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting the Commission will have a focused discussion on proposed actions related to the proposed street network and to obtaining new street connections as part of development activities. Giving this topic a separate discussion is warranted due to its importance to achieving the Subarea Plan goals and the complexity of the issues, as well as the questions and input received from property and business owners.

The City is currently developing a Subarea Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a 601-acre area, including the current 485-acre Regional Growth Center and a 116-acre proposed expansion area. The effort will result in a plan and implementation strategies to achieve local and regional goals for the neighborhood, as well as programmatic environmental approval for future development that is consistent with the plan.

From early in this planning effort, it has been clear that street network connectivity is a major issue. The existing network includes multiple large blocks without street connections. This situation results in a heavy traffic burden on the major arterials and reduces the walkability of the neighborhood. The large block pattern is also a barrier to the urban development pattern envisioned in the Subarea Plan. To address these issues, the plan incorporates a proposed new street network, as well as a regulatory approach to establishing new connections along with property redevelopment. This is an approach utilized by multiple other jurisdictions in similar circumstances.

There are several key decisions that must be made in crafting the proposed connectivity requirement. These include development thresholds at which new connections would be required, standards which new roadways and pedestrian pathways must meet, and how new construction will be financed. The project team benchmarked cities including the City of Lacey, Bellevue and Seattle to develop a range of options.

At this meeting, staff will provide a summary of those major decision points, along with recommended options and requested guidance from the Commission.

Project information is available at [www.tacomamallneighborhood.com](http://www.tacomamallneighborhood.com). Contact Elliott Barnett at (253) 591-5389, or email the team at [tacmallneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:tacmallneighborhood@cityoftacoma.org) with any questions.

Attachment: Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Plan: Connectivity – Key Issues

c: Peter Huffman, Director





## Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Subarea Plan: Connectivity – Key Issues

*Planning Commission briefing, November 16, 2016*

Connectivity and a completed street network are vital to accommodating growth and enhancing transportation choices, are foundational elements of neighborhood form, and can be catalysts for investment and development.

The purpose of this briefing is to provide the Commission with an understanding of key considerations related to the proposed connectivity requirement and seek guidance in calibrating the proposal.

### Proposed street network

The Subarea Plan incorporates a Street Network Vision as the foundation of a range of actions to promote connectivity. The August 2016 map version has been updated based on stakeholder input and additional analysis. The street network has been laid out with the intent of effectively achieve multiple objectives, including:

- Transportation
  - Accommodate growth and enhance transportation network
  - Promote mode shift from Single Occupancy Vehicles
  - Rational and predictable street network based on the existing grid
  - Logical and efficient access management
  - Reflect topography
- Land use and urban design
  - Establish pattern for pedestrian-oriented land use
  - Placemaking
  - Catalyze development through enhanced access
  - Loop Road as signature feature
- Revisions to August 2016 version
  - Add I-5 HOV and transit off ramp
  - Revise the Northwest Quadrant street network (keeping the previous concept as an alternate)
  - Other minor refinements

*The revised Street Network Vision map is attached (Attachment 1).*

## Implementing the street network vision

One key strategy is City leadership in proactively implementing the priority capital projects identified in the Subarea Plan. The Plan is positioning the City for success in seeking grant funding by clearly demonstrating the need, a coordinated and well-planned approach to address it, and by showing both regional policy consistency and community support and partnership. City-lead and funded street improvements are generally of significant value to property owners.

The second key strategy is to fill in gaps in the network by adding new connections across large blocks, as illustrated in the street network vision. To that end, the Subarea Plan incorporates a proposed connectivity requirement. The intent is to link the addition of new segments of the network to major development activities.

The proposed connectivity approach has been guided by principles including the following:

- Balance predictability and flexibility
- Minimize impacts on current businesses and buildings
- Avoid creating a disincentive to investing in existing businesses
- Provide an equitable approach to paying for land and construction costs
- Avoid or compensate for disproportional impacts
- Provide design standards for streets and pedestrian paths
- Provide guidance for when connections must be public versus private
- Reflect nexus and proportionality land use legal principles

There remain several issues to address in implementing these principles into a logical, equitable and balanced connectivity approach. The following section lays out proposals and highlights remaining questions.

## Proposed connectivity requirement approach

### 1. Establish Street Network Tiers

- Tier 1 – Design and location are critical to the network
- Tier 2 - Establish urban “superblocks” (600 by 600 feet)
- Tier 3 - Achieve connectivity, access and mode shift
- Implementation of tiers
  - Tiers 1 and 2 connections required to follow street network vision alignments and must be publicly owned
  - There is flexibility regarding the location, design and ownership of Tier 3 connections

*The highlighted areas on the attached Connectivity Requirements Map (Attachment 2) are Large Blocks where a Tier 3 connection is needed, thus a Connectivity Plan would be required.*

## 2. Large Block Connectivity Plan

- When designated development thresholds are triggered, a Connectivity Plan would be required. The result is to allow flexibility in completing the Tier 3 connections.
- Connectivity Plans would be required to meet performance standards, including:
  - Maximum block frontage – 650 feet
  - Maximum block perimeter – 1800 linear feet
  - Maximum frontage-pedestrian – 350 feet
  - Align with roadways at intersections when feasible
  - Support the goals of the Subarea Plan
- Once a Connectivity Plan is in place, required implementation includes:
  - Buildings to orient on the alignment of the future street connection
  - When designated development thresholds are triggered, property owners would be required to provide a dedication, easement or private facility designed to City standards

## 3. Development thresholds

- Thresholds determine when action would be required to meet connectivity requirements.
- Staff are seeking input from the Planning Commission on appropriate thresholds, and will present a range of options.
- Guiding principles:
  - Strike a balance between allowing reasonable maintenance, enhancements and expansions of existing buildings; and, avoiding site improvements that become a barrier to achieving the connectivity in the future.
  - Connectivity Plan – a lower threshold would be appropriate
  - Dedication and/or construction – a high threshold would be appropriate

## 4. Paying for additional connections

- Staff are seeking input from the Planning Commission on this issue as well.
  - Preliminary recommendations would require the City to make funds available to some degree
  - While some tools exist (such as Local Improvement Districts), there may be a need for new funding mechanisms. Staff will present a range of options.
- Guiding principles:
  - Reflect the strength of the existing market
  - Differentiate between exactions required to address development impacts and City-initiated redevelopment activities
  - Acknowledge the limitations on available City funding
  - Ensure costs are proportionate to the impacts of development activities

Requested input

- Confirmation of the general concept of a tiered street network
- Input on the Connectivity Plan approach and guiding principles
- Input on how development thresholds should be calibrated
- Input on funding approaches, including key messages for the City Council

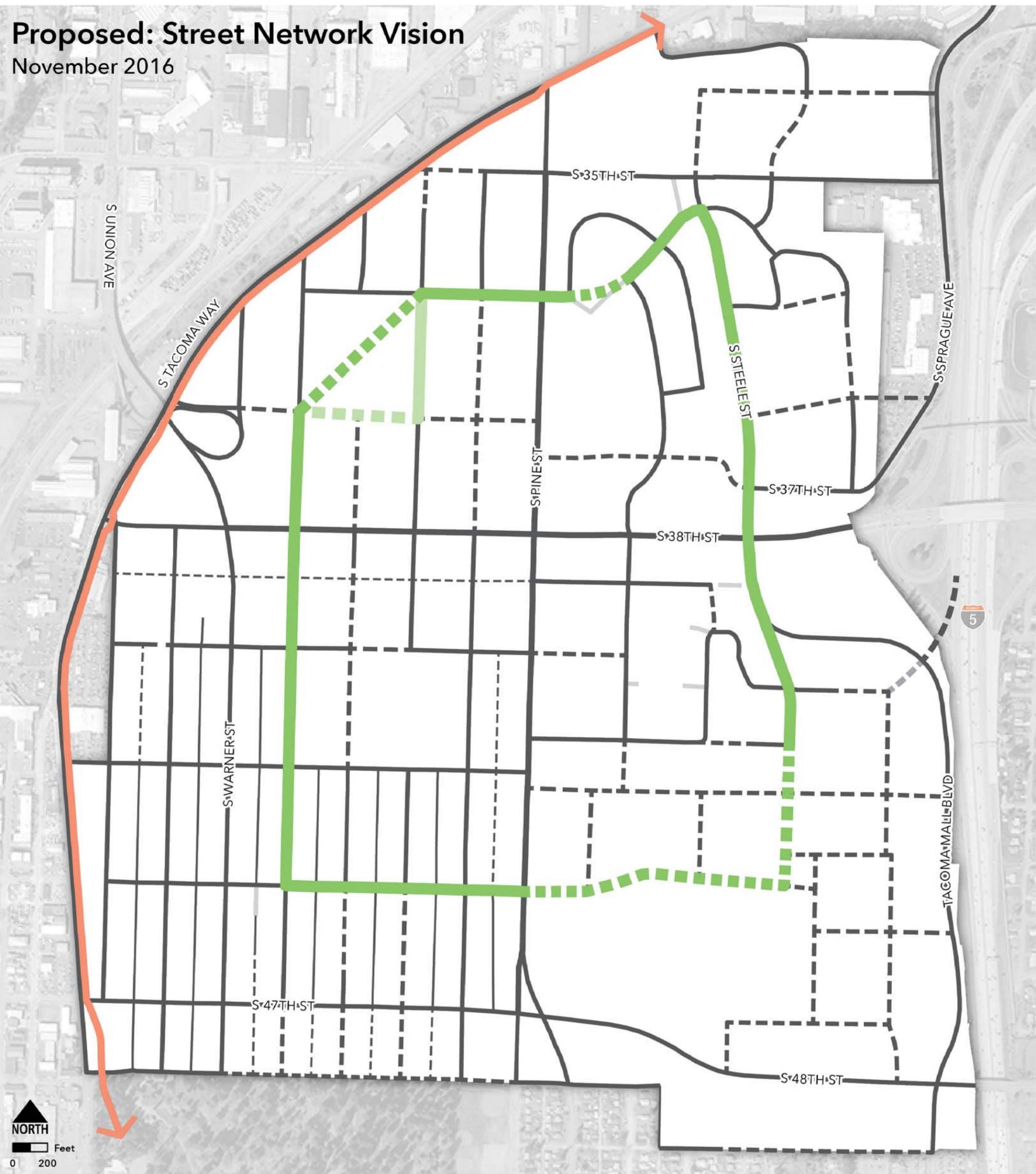
ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: *Proposed Street Network Vision Map*

Attachment 2: *Proposed Connectivity Requirements Map*

# Attachment 1: Proposed Street Network Vision Map

## 11/16/16 DRAFT



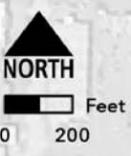
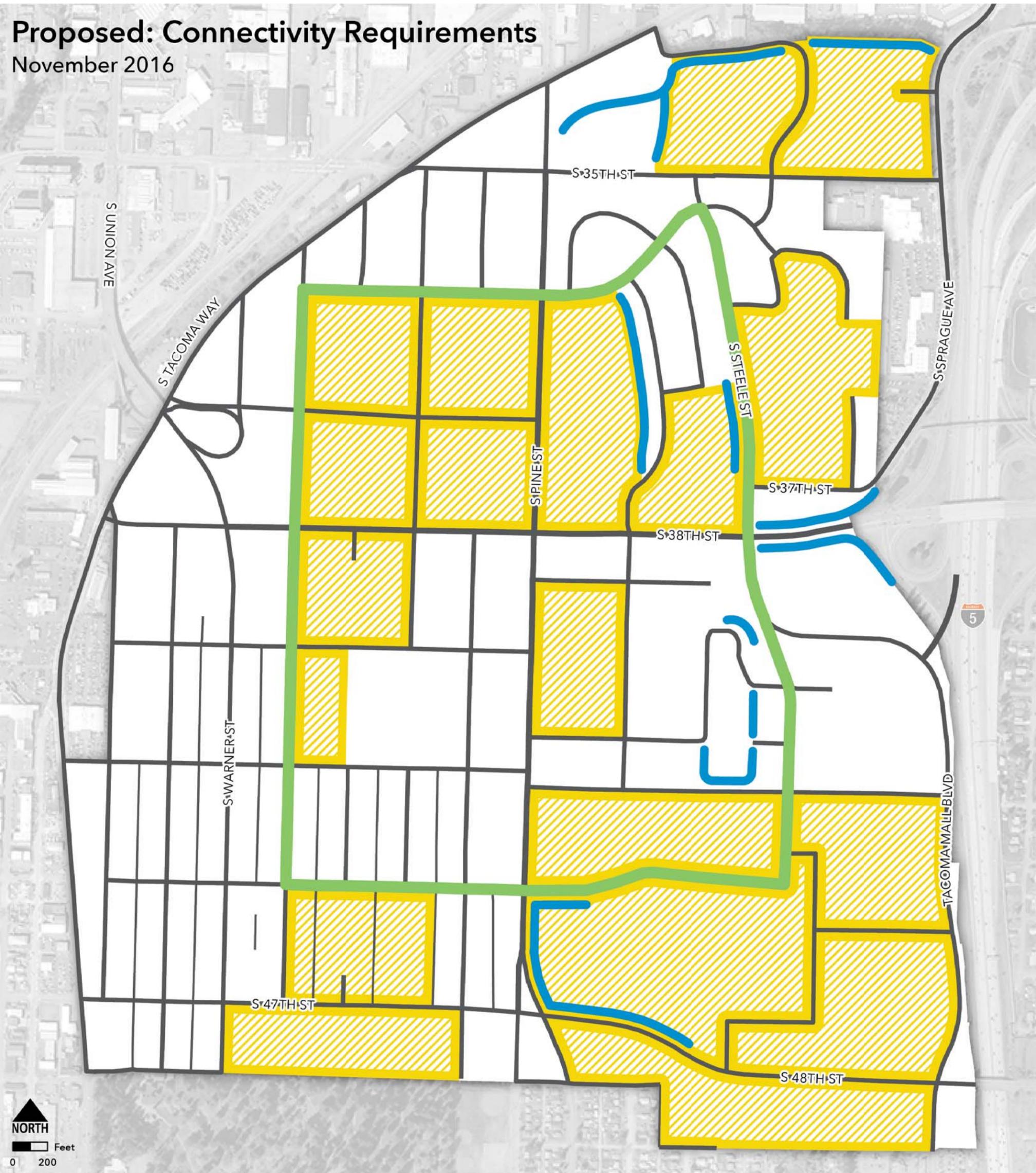
### LEGEND

- |                               |                                |                                      |  |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Expanded Neighborhood Subarea | <b>Proposed Street Network</b> | Street                               | Alley                                  |
| Water Flume Trail             | Loop Road                      | Alternative Street Connection to I-5 | Vacated Streets                        |
|                               | Alternate Loop Road            |                                      | <i>* New streets are shown dashed.</i> |

# Attachment 2: Proposed Connectivity Requirements

## Map - 11/16/16 DRAFT

Proposed: Connectivity Requirements  
November 2016



**LEGEND**

	Expanded Neighborhood Subarea		Proposed Street Network
	Large Blocks		Street
	Barriers to Connectivity		Alley



# **SAFE ROUTES**

— to School —

TACOMA, WA

**Join us for an OPEN HOUSE to learn more about  
Safe Routes to School in Tacoma**

**Wednesday  
November 16th  
5-7pm**

**Lincoln High School  
Cafeteria  
701 S. 37th St.  
Tacoma, WA 98418**

All are welcome.  
Food will be provided.

**For additional information  
on this program please go to:**  
[cityoftacoma.org/SRTS](http://cityoftacoma.org/SRTS)

**For additional information contact  
City Project Manager:**  
Jennifer Kammerzell, P.E.  
[jkammerzell@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:jkammerzell@cityoftacoma.org)  
Phone: 253-591-5511 (TTY-771)

**Have concerns about walking and biking to schools  
in Tacoma? Let us know by taking a short survey!**

**[www.surveymonkey.com/r/TAC-SRTS](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TAC-SRTS)**

The City of Tacoma ensures equal access in all of our programs, services, and activities. To request this information in an alternative format, or to request a reasonable accommodation for this event, please contact the project manager at the above number and e-mail.





City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item  
E-2**

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Commercial Project Report**  
**Date of Meeting:** November 16, 2016  
**Date of Memo:** November 10, 2016

At a previous meeting on February 17, 2016, Planning and Development Services Department (PDS) staff provided an update of the building and land use permitting activity for year 2015. Included in the presentation was a list of permit-seeking projects of estimated value at \$100,000 or more as contained on the PDS' database. The Commission requested that staff continues to provide such "Projects At-a-Glance" information on a periodic basis.

Please be advised that an improved version of the report, the Commercial Project Report, is now available online. The report provides locations and descriptions of permit-seeking projects of estimated value at \$100,000 or more and sorts the projects by Council districts. The report automatically pulls projects that have had any action on them within the last 30 days.

To access the report at your fingertips, please follow the following steps, which are also illustrated with screenshots shown on the back of this memo:

1. Visit the PDS' permitting website at [www.TacomaPermits.org](http://www.TacomaPermits.org).
2. Click on Button #2 – "Apply for Permits".
3. Under "What would you like to do today?", click on "Commercial Project Report".

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

c: Peter Huffman, Director

