TO: All Departments and Agencies with Jurisdiction

SUBJECT: Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance

In accordance with WAC 197-11-340, a copy of the Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance for the project described below is transmitted:

Applicant: City of Tacoma – Planning and Development Services Department

Proposal:
The proposed 2014 Annual Amendment would amend five elements of the Comprehensive Plan and eight chapters of the Tacoma Municipal Code, as listed below:

Comprehensive Plan Elements being amended:
- Growth Strategy and Development Concept Element
- Housing Element
- Transportation Element
- Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element
- Container Port Element (new element)

Tacoma Municipal Code Chapters being amended:
- 1.37 Transfer of Development Rights Program Administrative Code
- 13.04 Platting and Subdivisions
- 13.05 Land Use Permit Procedures
- 13.06 Zoning
- 13.06A Downtown Tacoma
- 13.11 Critical Areas Preservation
- 13.12 Environmental Code
- 13.17 Mixed-Use Center Development

The complete text of the proposed amendments and the associated staff analysis reports are available for review at the Planning and Development Services Department at the below address and posted on the Planning Division’s website at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (under the link “2014 Annual Amendment”).

Location: City of Tacoma

Lead Agency: City of Tacoma

City Contact: Lihuang Wung
Planning and Development Services Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA  98402
(253) 591-5682
The lead agency for this proposal has made a preliminary determination that this project does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2) (c). This decision was made after review of an environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public upon request. This Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2). Comments must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on March 21, 2014. The Responsible Official will reconsider the DNS based on timely comments and may retain, modify, or, if significant adverse impacts are likely, withdraw the DNS. Unless modified by the City, this determination will become final on March 28, 2014. There is no administrative appeal for this determination. Appeals must be filed in conjunction with appeals of the adopted amendments to the Growth Management Hearings Board; appeals shall be taken in accordance with procedures and limitations set forth in RCW 43.21C.075 and WAC 242-02. In addition to Growth Management Hearings Board requirements, a copy of the appeal shall be filed with the Planning and Development Services Department, 747 Market Street, Room 345, Tacoma, Washington 98402.

The Puyallup Tribe is notified that this initiates the consultation process.

Responsible Official: Peter Huffman
Position/Title: Director, Planning and Development Services Department

Signature: [Signature]

SEPA Officer Signature: [Signature]

Issue Date: February 24, 2014
Comment Deadline: March 21, 2014, 5:00 p.m.

NOTE: The issuance of this Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance does not constitute project approval. Future project applicants must comply with all other applicable requirements of the City of Tacoma and other agencies with jurisdiction prior to receiving development permits.

c: via U.S. Mail:
Tacoma Public School District #10, Steve Marikami, 3223 South Union Ave., Tacoma, WA 98409
Nature and Environment Advisory Council, Terry Larson, 808 North Ainsworth Ave., Tacoma, WA 98403
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Bill Sullivan, Natural Resources Director, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98403
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, David Duenos, Building Official, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Brandon Reyon, Tribal Historian, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Jeffrey Thomas, TFW Program Director, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Peter Mill, Planning Director, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Lisa A. Brautigam, Environmental Attorney, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Russ Ladley, Tribal Attorney, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Shawn Villegas, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Andrew Stroebel, Land Use Manager, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404


c: via E-mail:
Tacoma Planning and Development Services Department, Shirley Schultz, Shirley.schultz@cityoftacoma.org
Tacoma Planning and Development Services Department, Reuben McKnight, reuben.mcknight@cityoftacoma.org
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, SEPA Review Team, sepa@tpchd.org
Port of Tacoma, Jason Jordan, jjordan@portoftacoma.com
Metro Parks, Doug Fraser, doug@tacomaaparks.com
Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Steve Van Slyke, stevev@pscleanair.org
Department of Ecology, sepaunit@ecy.wa.gov
Department of Natural Resources, SEPA Center, PO Box 47015, Olympia, WA 98504-7015, sepacenter@dnr.wa.gov
Department of Transportation, Olympia Region Development Services Team, OR-SEPA-REVIEW@wdot.wa.gov

File: Planning and Development Services
A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:


2. Proponent/applicant:

City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA  98402-3769

3. Contact:

Lihuang Wung
Planning and Development Services Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA  98402-3769
Phone: (253) 591-5682
E-mail: lwung@cityoftacoma.org

4. Date checklist prepared:  February 24, 2014

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Tacoma, Planning and Development Services Department

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

The schedule (critical dates) for the 2014 Annual Amendment is as follows:

Aug. 2013-Feb. 2014: Analysis of the proposed amendments
February-March 2014: Public review of the proposed amendments
March 19, 2014: Planning Commission public hearing
April 16, 2014: Planning Commission makes recommendations to the City Council
April-May 2014: City Council review of the Commission’s recommendations
May 20, 2014: City Council study session and public hearing
May 20 & June 3, 2014: City Council considers adoption of the proposed amendments
July 1, 2014: Effective date of adopted amendments

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

The Comprehensive Plan and implementing development regulations are amended on an annual basis consistent with the State Growth Management Act. The proposed changes to text, map and policies of the Comprehensive Plan will apply to future land use and development. Proposed changes to the Land Use Regulatory Code and the Official Zoning Map will provide the basis to evaluate and regulate future development proposals.
8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

SEPA analyses have been prepared for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code on an annual basis since 1994. Listed below are those for the last three years, with the rest on file and available for review upon request:

- SEP2013-40000195799 Adoption of 2013 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code
- SEP2012-40000176242 Adoption of 2012 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code
- SEP2011-40000157940 Adoption of 2011 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

There are no known applications; however, future development applications would be subject to the approved amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Regulatory Code.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Regulatory Code will be adopted by the City Council by ordinance, i.e., through the legislative process. Future development applications will be subject to the amended Plan, regulations, and zoning classifications and be approved through issuance of various permits and approvals as required.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.

The proposed 2014 Annual Amendment would amend five elements of the Comprehensive Plan and eight chapters of the Tacoma Municipal Code, as listed below:

**Comprehensive Plan Elements being amended:**
- Growth Strategy and Development Concept Element
- Housing Element
- Transportation Element
- Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element
- Container Port Element (new element)

**Tacoma Municipal Code Chapters being amended:**
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- 13.06A Downtown Tacoma
- 13.11 Critical Areas Preservation
- 13.12 Environmental Code
- 13.17 Mixed-Use Center Development

The complete text of the proposed amendments and the associated staff analysis reports are available for review at the Planning and Development Services Department and posted on the Planning Division’s website at [www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning) (and linked to “2014 Annual Amendment”). A summary packet of the amendments is available at all branches of the Tacoma Public Library.
The proposed “2014 Annual Amendment” is packaged with nine (9) applications for amending the Comprehensive Plan and/or Land Use Regulatory Code, as summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center</strong></td>
<td>Designating that portion of the former ASARCO property located in the City of Tacoma (a 29-acre site) as a Mixed-Use Center and a residential target area. (A private application by Point Ruston LLC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Point Defiance Park Land Use Policies</strong></td>
<td>Adding a policy to the Comprehensive Plan to recognize Point Defiance Park as a unique asset and a regional destination; and clarifying in the Land Use Regulatory Code potential permitting pathways that Metro Parks Tacoma could utilize, including the City’s Development Regulation Agreement (DRA) process. The proposed changes would allow for additional flexibility for the types of uses allowed at the park. (A private application by Metro Parks Tacoma).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Mixed-Use Centers Code Review (MUC-Lite)</strong></td>
<td>Conducting an evaluation of the existing development requirements within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use Centers, and particularly those applicable to mixed-use projects in the core of these districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Affordable Housing</strong></td>
<td>Amending the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code to implement Affordable Housing incentive, bonus, and inclusionary strategies which are part of a package of initiatives recommended by the City Council’s Affordable Housing Policy Advisory Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Container Port Element</strong></td>
<td>Creating a new element in the Comprehensive Plan that specifically addresses and provides goals and policies relative to the “Port Industrial Area.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element</strong></td>
<td>Amending this element of the Comprehensive Plan to reaffirm the vision and goals, reflect progress and changing circumstances since its adoption, update inventories, and enhance guidance on implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Sustainability Code Amendment</strong></td>
<td>Amending the Land Use Regulatory Code to encourage and incent sustainable development practices, advance City’s goals for sustainable development, and promote public health and active living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. Plan and Code Cleanup</strong></td>
<td>Amending various sections of the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Regulatory Code to keep information current, correct minor errors, provide additional clarity, and improve administrative efficiency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**12. Location of the Proposal:** (Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s).)
The proposed 2014 Annual Amendment entails only non-project actions and generally affects properties throughout the City of Tacoma. However two applications are worth pointing out. The first application concerning the Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center is located in the West End Neighborhood Council area, at the north end of Ruston Way and by the boundaries between the City of Tacoma and the City of Ruston, as shown in the map below. The second application for Point Defiance Park Land Use Policies, is located at the northernmost point within the City of Tacoma and consists of approximately 702 acres of parkland.

**Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center Location:**

![Map of Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center](image)

13. **Assessor Parcel Number:**

The proposed Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center site includes 11 parcels: 8950003311, 8950003312, 8950003313, 8950003314, 8950003315, 8950003316, 8950003317, 8950003318, 8950003319, 8950003320, and 8950003321.

Parcels affected by other applications are located throughout the city and are too numerous to list.

C. **SIGNATURE**

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: [Signature]

Determination of Nonsignificance and Environmental Checklist – 2014 Annual Amendment (2-24-14) Page 6 of 8
D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment. When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal that would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The 2014 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code (“2014 Annual amendment”) is a nonproject proposal; none of the proposed amendments contained therein is likely to result in increases in discharges, emissions, hazardous substances, or noise.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

No such measures are necessary as no increases are anticipated from any of the proposed amendments. Nonetheless, the proposed Sustainability Code Amendment should, over time, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help to improve overall air quality. The same positive environmental effects are expected to be reached by the proposed Urban Forestry Landscaping Code Update which will increase the quantity, quality, and health of trees and plants in the City, which will help to also improve air quality.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

The 2014 Annual Amendment is a nonproject proposal and is unlikely to have a significant impact on plants, animals, fish, or marine life.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

The proposed Sustainability Code Amendment should, over time, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help to improve overall air quality, thereby have a positive effect on plants, animals, fish, and marine life. In addition, the proposed Urban Forestry Landscaping Code Update is intended to enhance the quantity, quality, and health of trees and other plants in the City which will also have a positive effect on animals.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

The 2014 Annual Amendment is a nonproject proposal and is unlikely to deplete energy or natural resources. Further, the Sustainability amendment would provide a positive effect on energy and natural resources through the adoption and encouragement of regional stormwater best management practices, pervious pavement and rainfall catchment systems, enhanced residential insulation, and the identification of code sections that are supportive of low impact stormwater management.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

The proposed Sustainability Code Amendment should, over time, reduce greenhouse gas emissions; thereby help conserve energy and natural resources.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks,
wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The 2014 Annual Amendment is a nonproject proposal and will affect environmentally sensitive areas, such as the shoreline in the Point Ruston Amendment. However, the proposals either have no direct effect or will have a positive effect through habitat enhancement, as with the Open Space Amendment.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

No such measures are necessary as no impacts are anticipated from any of the proposed amendments.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

The 2014 Annual Amendment is a nonproject proposal and does not affect land and shoreline use at the project level.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

No such measures are necessary as no impacts are anticipated from any of the proposed amendments. Nonetheless, the proposed amendments to the Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element contains some elements that are intended to enhance the shoreline’s positive and distinct features and improve the aesthetic qualities of the shoreline, specifically on the Thea Foss Waterway. In addition, the proposed Point Ruston Mixed-Use Center would further support the redevelopment and remediation of the former ASARCO plant superfund site.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

The 2014 Annual Amendment is a nonproject proposal and does not increase demands on transportation, public services or utilities. Further, the Sustainability amendment would provide a positive effect on utilities through reduced utility use. Specific examples include the adoption and encouragement of regional stormwater best management practices, pervious pavement and rainfall catchment systems, enhanced residential insulation, and the identification of code sections that are supportive of low impact stormwater management.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

No such measures are necessary as no impacts are anticipated from any of the proposed amendments. Nonetheless, the proposed Sustainability Code Amendment would increase the amount of required bicycle facilities to be consistent with the City’s goals for urban design, healthy living, transportation mode shifts, and greenhouse gas reduction.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

The proposals do not conflict with local, state, or federal laws, but will advance climate change, sustainability, and conservation objectives as set forth in these laws and requirements. Additionally, the proposed amendments are designed to support dense urban growth, which in affect supports the protection of existing, more undeveloped suburban and rural areas.