



City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item
D-2**

To: Planning Commission
From: Stephen Atkinson, Associate Planner, Planning Services Division
Subject: **Mixed-Use Centers Review**
Meeting Date: August 20, 2014
Memo Date: August 13, 2014

At the request of Council Members Ibsen and Mello, City staff will be conducting a comprehensive review of the City's Mixed-Use Centers, to include possible modifications to the number, location and types of designated centers. On August 20, 2014 staff will present the draft scope of work for this review, to be conducted as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update.

In accordance with the State Growth Management Act (GMA) and the Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2040, the City of Tacoma is required to plan for 60,000 new jobs and 70,000 new residents by 2030. The City's Comprehensive Plan calls for accommodating a significant share of this future population and employment growth within compact and well-connected mixed-use centers.

The mixed-use centers are intended to be areas that provide a range of housing choices, employment opportunities, transit-supportive development, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and a mix of shops, services and public spaces. Renewing and transforming the mixed-use centers into functional, vibrant, sustainable urban villages is critical to achieving the City's long-term goals and vision for its future.

The Plan currently identifies 17 Mixed-Use Centers, which are spread throughout the City and divided into four basic types or levels: the downtown center, the urban center (Tacoma Mall), and the community and neighborhood centers.

Unfortunately, while most of the mixed-use centers were created in the mid-1990's they have seen relatively limited new growth, particularly the type of compact, mixed-use growth that was envisioned. In order to achieve the community's long-term goals, ensure that the community can accommodate new growth in a positive manner, and focus the limited redevelopment tools and staff resources in a way that can be most effective, it is time to review, reevaluate and potentially refine the designated mixed-use centers.

Makers Architecture and Urban Design will be consulting on the project to provide technical resources and analysis.

Key questions:

What characteristics define the vision for a mixed-use center and which existing centers best exhibit these characteristics?

Which of these characteristics, when lacking, poses the greatest constraint to achieving the vision?

Which tools are most effective for enhancing the specific characteristics?

What amount of total population and household density is needed within and adjacent to the mixed-use center to support the desired commercial activity?

What amount of total population and household density is needed within and adjacent to the mixed-use center to support transit ridership?

Is there an optimal number and distribution of mixed-use centers given the size of our community and the existing development activity?

Where and what type of growth has been occurring within the City's mixed-use centers compared to growth outside the mixed-use centers?

The purpose of the discussion with the Commission at the August 20, 2014 meeting is to review the draft scope of work and identify any additional information, analysis, or research questions that the Commission desires in order to better evaluate the Mixed-Use Centers and provide a recommendation to Council. Attached is the Council's CCR and the draft scope of work with Makers Architecture and Urban Design. If you have any questions, please contact me at (253) 591-5531 or satkinson@cityoftacoma.org.

Attachments

c. Peter Huffman, Director



**CITY OF TACOMA, WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST (CCR)**

TO: Mayor & City Council
FROM: Council Member Ibsen, District 1
Council Member Mello, At-large Position 8
COPIES TO: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager; Executive Leadership Team; file
SUBJECT: Proposed Mixed-Use Centers Review
DATE: July 12, 2013

ITEM/ISSUE PROPOSED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION:

The following item will be scheduled on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Committee Of The Whole:

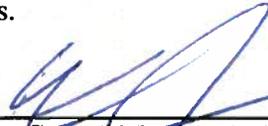
I respectfully ask for City Council concurrence to have staff and the Planning Commission research and bring to City Council their recommendations on possible modifications to the number, location and types of designated mixed-use centers. This review and the resulting recommendations should be coordinated with the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee.

BRIEF BACKGROUND:

The Mixed-Use Centers are at the heart of the Comprehensive Plan's growth and development strategy. They are intended to accommodate a significant share of Tacoma's future population and employment growth by encouraging a more intense level of development that is well-served by transportation options. The mixed-use centers are designed to be areas that provide a range of housing choices, employment opportunities, transit-supportive development, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and a mix of shops, services and public spaces.

However, there are currently 17 separate mixed-use centers spread throughout the City. Most have seen relatively limited new growth since their creation nearly 20 years ago, and even fewer have seen the type of dense mixed-use development that is envisioned. While this mixed-use vision is likely still appropriate in many of the mixed-use centers, it may not be appropriate in all of them based on factors such as their current development patterns, market conditions, surrounding zoning and density, and infrastructure. It is also unrealistic for the City and community to focus the limited number and types of redevelopment tools needed to jump start these centers in so many different areas. It is time to comprehensively reevaluate the City's mixed-use centers, how many of them we should have, which ones are the most appropriate and feasible, and whether the current vision for them is realistic in all cases.

SUBMITTED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION BY:



City Council Member Anders Ibsen, District 1



City Council Member Ryan Mello, At-large Position 8

Tacoma Mixed Use Center Review

DRAFT Scope of Work

Goals:

To refine the mixed-use centers strategy to align with the neighborhood and commercial districts that best exhibit the conditions necessary to achieve a compact and complete mixed use center.

- To accommodate 80% of the City's growth allocations within compact and complete mixed use centers that offer walkable and transit oriented neighborhoods with plenty of services to meet most residents' basic needs, such as parks, schools, shopping and dining.
- To develop strategies that better integrate the Mixed-Use Centers into the surrounding neighborhoods.
- To integrate the closely-connected needs of land use and transportation and to make the most efficient use of land and financial resources.

Outcomes:

- Possible outcomes include:
 - Mixed-use center designation and zoning boundary amendments;
 - Revisions to the location and distribution of designated mixed use centers;
 - Prioritization of designated centers;
 - New land use designation classifications;
 - Individualization of centers and center-strategies.

Task Elements:

1. Finalize Scope and Schedule
 - Meet with City staff to discuss project, schedule, outreach and final deliverables.
2. Data Review
 - Conduct field visit to the mixed use centers (MUCs).
 - Compile and assess data and findings from previous mixed-use center review and identify data gaps.
3. Coordination with other ongoing City planning initiatives
 - City of Tacoma Strategic Plan
 - Transportation Master Plan
 - Multifamily Tax Credit Incentive review
 - Land Use Designation review

4. Mixed-Use Center Evaluation

- Develop criteria for evaluating the mixed-use centers for the following 6 factors: Density, Destinations, Design, Demographics, Distribution and Distances.

Product: Metrics, criteria or other means to evaluate MUC's relative to the 6 factors.

- Apply the criteria to each individual MUC.

Product: Map-folio and summary for each MUC presenting the results of the evaluation.

5. Market Analysis

- From a market and economic perspective, identify, in general terms, the potential for development and/or sustained economic performance of each MUC. Categorize MUC's as "established", "emerging", or "limited" based on economic conditions and development potential. Establish baseline population and employment densities needed to support desired vision for commercial activity within each MUC and for transit supportive nodes. Compare targets to existing conditions.

Product: Brief report summarizing the market conditions and likely development potential of each MUC. The findings will be stated in general terms without quantitative projections.

- For up to 4 sites selected by City staff and the consultant team, perform a feasibility analysis that examines economic performance of a specific development proposal on each site. The purpose of this analysis is to determine the conditions that affect development feasibility and what could be done to enhance development opportunities.

Product: Sketch development plans and feasibility evaluation for up to 4 sites.

6. Mixed-Use Center Report

- Prepare a report summarizing the findings from Tasks 2 – 4.
- Prepare final fact sheets and profile for each MUC including area wide vision, assessment of existing conditions, barriers and constraints, development potential, opportunity sites, and potential policy interventions.
- Present findings to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Product: Draft Mixed-Use Center Report

7. Land Use Designation Review

- For those MUCs where boundaries or regulatory changes are requested by staff, the Planning Commission, or City Council, prepare draft recommendations for those changes.

Product: Additional material for the fact sheets that suggests proposed modifications to the land use designations and regulatory measures, as well as other measures to encourage MUC development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Product: Updated Centers Map.