Acknowledgements

Dome District Stakeholder Group

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Mark Johnson, Sound Transit
Jim Merritt, Merritt Architecture
Don Meyer, Foss Waterway Development Authority
Greg Snyder, Pierce Transit
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VIA Architecture
The area surrounding Tacoma's famous Dome has traditionally been considered a neighborhood extension of downtown - a unique working warehouse environment that is influenced by the Brewery District to the west, the Thea Foss Waterfront to the north and the Port to the east. Over the past two decades, the District has been eclipsed by its position as a place to come and go, rather than as a place to spend time. Criss-crossed by rail corridors such as Amtrak, Sounder, Light Rail, Tacoma Rail, and BNSF, and its proximity to I-5 and I-705, the District is a transient destination for many, but is under-utilized as an urban, 24-hour environment. Rather than continue to be marginalized by these public infrastructure investments, the Dome District Stakeholders, and the City of Tacoma see opportunity in the next installment of proposed investments.

As part of a regional transportation strategy, the District will shift from a link in the chain for local and regional transit to a priority nexus that joins the South Sound to centers throughout Pierce, King and Thurston Counties and beyond. The question this document attempts to answer is how to best make use of growing transit accessibility as one of the Dome’s key assets in addition to relatively low priced land, the Dome events venue, and proximity to a re-energized waterfront.

Resulting from a collaborative design process with Dome District Stakeholders, the following document takes a fresh look at ideal urban design alternatives to identify likely scenarios for development. As a supplement to the existing 2001 Tacoma Dome Area Plan and coordinated with the 2008 Tacoma Downtown Plan, this document provides an update on existing conditions and recommendations for the City’s next steps.

The overall goal is to help encourage the critical mass to move the neighborhood forward and to better integrate both existing and planned large scale infrastructure investments.

1.1 Development Strategies

The following list summarizes the development strategies that will be further explored in the last section of the report. These strategies have been developed to extend and supplement the 2001 Plan’s overall strategies of a) connecting the Dome District with downtown and b) providing complementary uses.

Strategy 1. Transit Rich Walkable Neighborhood: making the most of regional investments

This development strategy encourages public and private partnering during planned infrastructure investments for Transit Oriented Development. With a sizable amount of city-owned land located adjacent to the Tacoma Dome, the City can provide leadership through maximizing the efficiency of public lands. The development concept envisions a public/private partnership to supply housing and other uses, including high tech green collar, hotel or entertainment, and shared parking - all designed to support the pedestrian environment.

Strategy 2. A Shoreline Neighborhood: Water Experience/Park Integration

Located at the southern end of the revitalized Foss Waterway and just to the west of the Puyallup River, the Dome District should be designed to heighten interaction with the water’s edge. Coordination with the Foss Waterway Development Authority during master planning of the East and West Waterfront Parks at the head of the Foss are hoped to yield concepts for pedestrian access from Puyallup Avenue. Other opportunities for park integration include the Ravine below I-705 to A’ Street and an exemplary sustainability street at C Street to disperse ‘fingers of green’ across the district.

Building off of regional priorities to clean up Puget Sound, the existing City of Tacoma Sewer and Pump station can be re-invented as an opportunity. This city-owned parcel has the potential to become a site for education and environmental stewardship of tidal wetland/reclaimed water.

Strategy 3. Making a Distinctive Place: Building Place - Distinctive Urban Form

The Core Development area to the west of G’ Street is made up of relatively small lots and unassembled property. With its proximity to the Port and freight lines, historic industrial buildings such as Delin sawmill, Galiher’s millcreek and millpond, as well as warehouse buildings in ‘Gasoline Alley’ pepper the district. Many of these buildings mark the area’s identity through texture and scale, as well as building materials of a working industrial area. Already, public art and station design reflect this history and as the District continues to redevelop, architecture will continue to provide a creative response to the district’s authentic existing fabric.

Strategy 4. A Destination Neighborhood: Integrating the Dome

This Development Strategy provides an exploration of designs that will help large scale entertainment uses, such as the Dome and the proposed LeMay Museum contribute to a more complete neighborhood experience through a human scaled, walkable environment. This strategy also recommends shared parking strategies during ongoing redevelopment.
2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS (2001 to 2008)

2.0 Land Use and Development
There are four districts that shape land-use in the station area with a majority of the land in the Urban Center Mixed-Use Tacoma Dome (UCX-TD) District. SB is a shoreline district and is also subject to the policies within the Thea Foss Waterfront Development Plan. The chart on the following page summarizes zoning regulations and intent.

2.1 Actual Land Use
The actual land-use within the District remains a mix of industrial, warehousing, storage and service uses, as well as a large amount of surface parking and dedicated right-of-way. Smaller scale operations and character buildings are concentrated on the west side of ‘G Street.’ There are limited existing residential uses within the Dome District.

2.2 Employment and Commerce
With no single employment sector dominating the area, the Dome District is one of the least homogeneous sections of Downtown Tacoma. According to the Downtown Economic Impact Assessment, Business & Professional Services is the single largest employment sector with just under 450 workers, representing 17.1% of district employment. The employment sector is also heavily buoyed by StaffPro, a company that provides security and event management for engagements at the Tacoma Dome.

Manufacturing is the second leading employment sector with 13.7% of all jobs in the area and is primarily dominated by smaller independent firms.
### Actual Land Use Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Acres in Actual Use</th>
<th>Acres in Public Ownership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation/Entertainment (Dome)</td>
<td>City of Tacoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transit utilities</td>
<td>Pierce Transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manufacturing/Industrial</td>
<td>Tacoma Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warehouse/Wholesale trade</td>
<td>Sound Transit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Major Landowners</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>BNSF Railroad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Caruthers Mill</td>
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<td></td>
<td>RR ROW</td>
<td>LaClare Investments</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotel/Motel</td>
<td>Puget Sound</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Tribe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auto-related</td>
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<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Dome District Zoning and Maximum Building Height

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Intent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UCX-TD</td>
<td>The aim of this district is to allow dense residential, commercial and institutional development, as well as a center for regional transit systems. Design Standards ensure that the buildings are pedestrian-oriented with limitations on vehicular-oriented designs and/or uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Allows most uses, including residential as part of mixed-use. Allows drive throughs with any permitted use. Does not allow heavy industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>This district is intended to allow most industrial uses. The impacts of these industrial uses include extended operating hours, heavy truck traffic, and higher levels of noise and odors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR</td>
<td>Allows most uses. This zone is a Downtown zoning district, providing flexibility through a bonus system. The zone may undergo shift during an implementation process in 2009, particularly bonusing and off-street parking requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Building Height

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Building Height</th>
<th>Density/ FAR</th>
<th>Parking Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UCX-TD</td>
<td>75 feet, or 120 feet with a cultural institution or 25% of gross floor area is residential or hotel or with amenities. Height limits up to 225 feet in the southern portion of the zone with additional amenities (see map) (TMC 13.06.300E)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>75 feet</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not based on zoning, based on use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>100 feet</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not based on zoning, based on use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WR</td>
<td>100 feet</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Buffer between heavy industrial uses and less intensive commercial and/or residential uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Burden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</table>
2.3 Land Value Estimates

The estimated price of land is relatively low throughout the Dome District. Unlike other cities with high transit accessibility, there has been little economic impact to date of the existing train route on 25th street.

$ per square foot (estimated)

- 1 - 5
- 6 - 12
- 13 - 17
- 18 - 25
- 26 - 47

* City owned or undevelopable

2.4 Redevelopment Potential

Existing buildings vary in quality and upkeep. Potential redevelopment sites were established by cross-referencing existing buildings with allowable development capacity and a cursory review of the building’s general condition.

‘Character buildings’ identifies those that contribute to the district character through their architectural legacy, industrial roots or the fine grain fabric of the area.

Buildings with ‘limited redevelopment potential’ are transit stations or newly built or upgraded buildings.

2.5 Land Ownership + Development Opportunities

Small, unassembled parcels west of ‘G Street’ and north of 25th Street imply a normative, market-based approach to infill development, while larger, publicly-owned properties and land impacted by new infrastructure improvements can act as ‘controlled’ catalysts and partnership opportunities. A city-led RFP on the Tacoma Dome Northern Lots can help change the underlying assumption of the land value and begin to capitalize upon the Dome’s accessibility to transit and the waterfront.

While the Dome properties contain potential for forward thinking partnership opportunities, reducing risk for developers, the application of a collaborative development strategy requires a more complex approach, and will require clear leadership from the city and its transit agency partners.

Incentives for Economic Development already allowed in the District:
- Community Empowerment Zone
- Renewal Community
- Multi-family tax exemption

Unassembled ownership
- Potential for partnering - near term, impacted by infrastructure changes
- Under contract with the LeMay Museum
2.6 Transportation + Circulation

The City of Tacoma is rethinking its relationship with the single occupancy vehicle by investing in transportation choice. This means that in addition to driving, the city will prioritize alternatives such as cycling, walking and transit to help keep people moving. Relevant policies and programs already in motion include a Streetcar Advisory Group, the statewide Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center (GTEC), and the city’s development of ‘complete street’ guidelines for mixed use centers. Together, these initiatives will help to create an environment of livable and walkable streets for all users. These efforts come at the right time - the Federal Transportation Administration recorded a national decline of 3.9% in driving and an increase of 11% in transit ridership from July 2007 to July 2008.

The Dome District is a significant piece of the transportation puzzle. Already, the District is the most transit rich in Tacoma; a majority of blocks lie within a 1/4 walking radius from Freighthouse Square or the LINK light rail. Additionally, improvements associated with the November passage of Sound Transit 2 will bring investments including a possible extension of the existing LINK light rail, additional Sounder trains (65% increase) and express bus service, and other track and station upgrades.

A summary of transportation existing assets and upcoming changes is listed to the right.

1. LINK Light Rail

The first application of Light Rail technology in Washington State, this 1.6 mile trolley provides free service to downtown every fifteen minutes. Operating on a single track through the Dome District, LINK is a popular connection between the existing Tacoma Dome Station Park-and-Ride (currently free of charge) and the downtown employment centers. Although operating hours end at 10:00 PM, additional trains are added to complement events located at the Tacoma Dome.

2. Sound Transit Sounder Commuter Rail

As of October 2008, the City of Tacoma won the largest of 15 Federal Railroad Administration Grants to help fund the Sounder commuter rail to Lakewood. With a proposed completion date of 2012, this route will extend through the Tacoma Dome and Brewery Districts on an elevated trackway. Currently, the route will have a minimum of eight trains (with the passage of ST2 up to 18), as well as eight Amtrak trains. Over the past year, according to the FTA, the Sounder has seen the largest jump in ridership in the nation, up 38% as more people chose to save on rising gas prices and avoid congested roadways.

Impact and recommendations

50 C Street between 26th and 25th Streets will be impacted by this increased number of at-grade train crossings. The City should work with Sound Transit to develop a plan to avoid closure of the street. The land area surrounding 50 C Street should be sought in combination with new development opportunities that can also mitigate noise impacts.

Impact of a train at-grade crossing at ‘Q Street’ on freight and other commercial vehicles should be studied, and mitigation applied and prioritized. In particular vehicular movements from the southwest (up South Tacoma Way) and the South (McKinley neighborhood).

The elevation of the trackway six feet above-grade at ‘A Street’ may force the street to be closed, rerouting vehicular access to I-5 from 26th Street. The design for a pedestrian undercrossing should be only one component of a broader range of ‘place-making’ opportunities that do not isolate the area from its surrounding urban environment.

3. AMTRAK

As part of the Sounder Lakewood Extension project, Amtrak’s Tacoma Dome Station will shift to Freighthouse Square with trains traveling along the new inland route south. The move will shorten the trip between Portland and Seattle by a minimum of six minutes, possibly significantly more, by reducing the conflicts between passenger and freight trains (the latter will continue around Point Defiance). Amtrak will run a minimum of eight trains per day with an increased number of trains likely as Federal funding is expanded to combat escalating fuel costs.

4. SR7 Corridor Bus Rapid Transit

The Park and Ride lot at the Dome District is now operating at above capacity. Pierce Transit has shown that a high percentage of commuters who travel to downtown and the Dome District travel via South Pacific Avenue (SR7). This route will provide a new transit alternative with speeds comparable to the personal automobile. Additional Pierce Transit investments in Park and Rides at egress points on South Pacific Ave will lessen parking impacts on the Dome District.

5. Strategic Transit Corridors in Downtown

The Downtown Plan calls for the city to develop a set of “strategic transportation corridors” (see Downtown Plan policy 2.3G.1) to accommodate future high or medium capacity transit, including an extended street car. The Plan enables the City to reserve key portions of street right-of-way, as well as promote collaborations between the City and Pierce Transit. This ensures that the City will be prepared to shift more investments into transportation in the future. Within the Dome District the city should consider this strategy as they plan for Bus Rapid Transit and ensure that transit links are connecting to downtown employment and population centers.

2.7 A Shared Parking Strategy

A Parking Management Plan coordinated by a City of Tacoma Parking Advisory group is currently underway. The Plan includes on-street pay parking stations in select downtown areas, the creation of permitted parking zones and enables a satellite, ‘shared public parking strategy’ that places structured commuter parking at the strategic entry and egress points to downtown. According to the Downtown Plan 2008, “the provision of parking should not dominate the quality of life, street character, or other considerations in the creation of viable urban places. A flexible parking management strategy should mitigate the amount of capital investment necessary for automobile infrastructure and leverage opportunities for economic development.”

Within the Tacoma Dome District, business owners are impacted by long-term commuter parking on streets near Tacoma Dome Station and a lack of enforcement. As the area redevelops, shared parking and on-street enforcement should efficiently manage increasing intensity of use within the district. In particular, a shared parking plan should be developed with stakeholders that will best optimize the complementary uses of transit users, shoppers, event participants and destination tourism/entertainment (LeMay). In this way replacement parking as the surface lots around the Dome redevelop should be shared between uses.

Transportation Assets and Changes

1/4 mile walking radius from Freighthouse Square/Tacoma Dome Station
3.0 DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS + PROCESS

During the development of this report, design scenarios were used to identify the most important principles for the future development of the Dome District. Visions were based on a set of collective assumptions identified within planning policy by Dome District Stakeholders and City Staff, as well as expectation of the private development market place, and best practices for maximizing walkability and livability in an urban center with multi-modal transit hub opportunities.

An economic analysis has not been performed to rationalize the aspects of this plan. The assumed viable development sites are based on city-owned land and a brief visual inspection of existing conditions. Existing properties that appeared to be near the end of their useful economic life, were under-utilized for their location or in a dilapidated condition were assumed to be viable for new development - see map on page 3 for more detail on this topic. Consolidation of property ownership was not part of this exercise. Generally, available or under-utilized smaller properties were consolidated to create a more viable build out.

Draft Concept I
Presented October 16

Draft Concept II
Presented October 30 - Public Meeting
A SHARED VISION

The resulting illustrative development concept provides the City and Dome Stakeholders with a shared vision for the future development of the Dome District.

While only one option of many, the concept provides indication of the direction for the District, including an expanded residential component near to a growing transit hub. This concept shows maximized building heights (225’ zoning with bonus amenities) in the southern quarter of the District. Concepts that remain from previous design iterations include green street design, better integrated Dome and LeMay Museum, and enhanced pedestrian connections throughout the 1/4 mile walking radius.

The following set of actions and recommendations have been developed to help the city and the Dome stakeholders build the District as a high quality living environment.

Existing Properties (to remain)
Preferred residential (parking underground)
Retail /Entertainment/convention facilities
Likely commercial and/or mixed uses with retail on the ground floor
Structured Parking (retail at grade)
Green Park or Plaza space/ enhance LID street design
Transit Oriented Development (TOD) helps to optimize public investment in transportation infrastructure by placing residential density near transit stations. This has been shown to significantly increase ridership and these added trips reduce the amount of public subsidy over the long term for new systems. As a result, many cities are looking to shape areas within a 5- to 10-minute walking radius to accommodate the five core TOD development principles: Density, Diversity, Design, Distance to Transit, and Destination Accessibility.

Within the Dome District, land-use regulations are already transit-friendly. Existing zoning, UCX-TD, encourages high density and transit supportive land uses. The City has also worked to complete pedestrian amenities on key streets - both 25th Street associated with LINK, and the district’s core north and south route, ‘D Street’ have new sidewalks and other amenities.

However, significant development capacity remains within the 1/4 mile radius from Freighthouse Square. The Development Concept, rather than specifying a single solution, includes indicators for success through enhanced residential uses. Furthermore, obstacles to walkability, such as the commuter and freight rail tracks, I-705 and the Dome parking lots, interrupt the block structure. The TOD development strategy identifies actions and opportunities to mitigate these disruptions and finds win/win solutions to planned investments. For example, buffering the D to M rail connector at ‘S C Street’ with shared structured parking uses while planning for a design that bridges the trackway with residential or office uses.

Goals and Actions

1. The City should actively pursue a TOD project, making use of multi-sector, cross jurisdictional partnerships between transit agencies, municipalities and state government.

1.1 During ongoing infrastructure investments and changes related to the commuter rail extension, the City should encourage partnerships to maximize development opportunities in residual land. In particular, a partnership project on 26th between ‘C’ and ‘D’ Streets should be considered as a first step for a shared, mixed-use public parking garage. Potential partners are listed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Partners:</th>
<th>Private Partners:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sound Transit</td>
<td>Diamond Parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierce Transit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amtrak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To accomplish this goal the city may need to work with appropriate agency leaders to introduce policy changes and flexibility into institutionalized procedure.

1.2 The City should provide leadership for the Dome TOD, with an RFP for a public/private partnership for a mixed-use development in Dome Parking Lot A. This RFP should seek to provide uses that bring a permanent daytime presence to complement night time Dome events. These should include office, flex-tech, specialty and convenience retail, and restaurant uses.

1.3 The City should continue to work with the Puyallup Tribe to redevelop lands south of Freighthouse Square, as well as complete a connection identified in the vision to Freighthouse Square (see also 3.4).

2. Strategically manage the use and construction of parking facilities to balance vehicular access and the development opportunity for Dome District Development.

The quality of the urban experience is related directly to the minimization of the automobile’s impact on streets and land use. As such, the following actions are recommended:

2.1 New parking garages should not negatively affect the walking environment. On priority pedestrian streets within the 1/4 mile walking radius from Freighthouse Square, all ground level spaces should be designed to accommodate retail uses or be adapted to future pedestrian-oriented uses. Furthermore, it is recommended that all new structured parking within the 1/4 mile walking block be integrated (within the same building or project) with other uses, specifically hotel, residential or entertainment uses.

2.2 Coordinate with Sound Transit to provide access to station area shared public parking (combined with other uses) on the southern side of the D-M rail connector tracks. This will limit the need for vehicles to cross the tracks during peak hours and help mitigate impacts to connectivity by the trackway.

2.3 Where necessary, place vehicular priority lower than that of pedestrians or remove parking from streets in order to optimize transit and pedestrian flow, scale and quality of experience.

3. Enhance connectivity and intermodal access to respond to a variety of transport modes. Streets and connective links should promote bike, pedestrian, transit and vehicular uses.

3.1 Conduct a mobility study for traffic and transit circulation that will provide the City with clear answers to the following:

- Work with Pierce Transit to identify the best route for a new Bus Rapid Transit route from Pacific Avenue South.
- Identify future LINK expansion routes - in particular service south to the Puyallup casino.
- The 2001 Plan recommends that street design allow for safe crossings between ‘D’ Street and I-705 on Puyallup Ave. Move the city forward with a plan to pedestrianize and “calm” traffic including enhanced or pedestrian controlled crossings to reconnect the district with the Foss Waterway south.
- Study and pursue an additional local access to the Dome’s future LeMay parking area from the WSDOT exit ramps at 26th street to help mitigate the impacts on north-south Streets by commuter rail.

3.2 Encourage collaboration between Pierce Transit and the Tacoma Dome to establish more bus service and transit options during events.

3.3 During station upgrades, collaborate with Sound Transit, the Puyallup Tribe and affected property owners to allow pedestrian access to the station from south of 26th Street. A bridge allowing access from both sides of the tracks will become more important as increased numbers of trains will impact the ‘D Street’ crossing at peak hours.

3.4 During the Lakewood commuter extension, ensure the future opportunity to build over the trackway between “D” and “C” Streets. (As of Nov. 2008; the transfer of air rights will require a developer that is willing to participate).

3.5 Continue to negotiate with LeMay to ensure that the museum and associated traffic impacts are integrated with ongoing development, in particular through internal pedestrian connections along “C” Street.

3.6 A connection from ‘D’ Street to the Foss East Waterfront Park should continue to be pursued.

4 New stations or transit facilities should be designed to enhance the overall “sense of place.”

Modal integration is important because it supports continuity of experience for the transit user. During Transit Station upgrades, ensure that designs incorporate the following principles:

- 1 Connect several modes of transportation
- 2 Use infrastructure efficiently
- 3 Provide for neighborhood fit
- 4 Address safety in urban design
- 5 Maintain or enhance existing connections.

Transit Oriented Development Principles

- Compact development and an appropriate threshold of residents/employees to support transit use
- A pedestrian-oriented and rich walking environment that encourages alternative travel modes, sociability and provides a variety of ways to circulate the neighborhood
- Diverse, mixed land uses and a range housing types
- A quick, well-connected walking distance to transit stations from area
- Connections and access from the station area to other destinations such as shopping areas and employment.
**Priority Pedestrian Streets**

- (1/4 mile walking radius)

**Completed Pedestrian Amenities**

- Impacted Intersections

**Connections and Parking**

- (1/4 mile walking radius)

**Near Term pedestrian enhancements**

**Mid-Term pedestrian enhancement (follow development)**

**Completed pedestrian enhancements**

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**Identifying Partnering Opportunities**

As per Goals and Action 1, relatively large land assemblies (including the Le May museum to the south) will allow the ‘Heart of the Dome District’ to develop first. A ripple effect of critical mass can then move outwards.

**Public/Private RFQ**

**Multi-block development:**

- Mixed-use
- Residential/Hotel with 22 story towers on low rise podium base
- Concept incorporates underground parking—with shared management scenario
- Maintain historic fire station
- Provide destination retail/Dome supportive uses at ground floor
- Continue East C Street to Lots C and D
- Consider making new connection from I-5 at an extension of a new 27th street; collaborate with WSDOT for feasibility

**Residual Land Opportunities + Partnering**

- Requires land consolidation on both sides of the tracks
- Destination retail uses with tall ceiling mezzanines, north of the track-way
- 5 levels of public parking (share with Sound Transit) clad w/retail at street and office above
- Put parking or office uses next to rail line to buffer noise impacts
- Any at-grade crossing at East C street must accommodate safety and hazard needs of Sound Transit.
- Utilize air rights for development over trackway.

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**TOD Implementation Roles**

**Public Partner**

- Land Acquisition and Consolidations
- Development entitlement
- Development regulations
- Permits
- Community Facilitator
- Land Owner
- Incentives
- Urban Design Plan

**Private Partner**

- Development Proposals
- Land Assembly
- Construction
- Design
- Entitlements

**Transit Agency**

- Transit Developer
- Planning Partner
- Development Partner
- Construction Facilitator

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**Planned Pierce Transit Office Facility**

- Retail at street - encourage residential if possible

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**Key infill site for high density housing**

**Upgrade ‘E Street’ Multimodal Connection or hill climb.**

**Freighthouse Square**

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**Partnership Opportunities**

- [a] Freighthouse Square
- [b] Planned Pierce Transit Office Facility - retail at street - encourage residential if possible

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**Existing parking - free**

- [a] ‘E Street’ upgrades for better connection to 25th
- [b] Pedestrian bridge coordinated with station upgrades connect to Dome
- [c] ‘C Street’
- [d] Pursue local access street
- [e] From the Puyallup to the Foss
Partnering To Connect + Clean the Foss Waterway, Commencement Bay and the Puget Sound

In collaboration with state and federal partners, the City of Tacoma has invested millions of dollars and years of effort to restore the formerly industrial Thea Foss, a 1.5 mile inlet off of Commencement Bay. Efforts included building new marinas, dredging and capping polluted soils, and habitat restoration. The results have been astounding - not only cleaning the Foss for recreational use, but land-side investments have brought a residential population to its shores. The renovation of Historic Albers Mill, The Glass Museum, and Thea’s Landing are crucial to Tacoma’s downtown renaissance.

The City is well on its way to realize the long term goal of a completed loop of water-related destinations. At the northern edge of the Dome District, the shoreline promenade will link downtown’s destinations traveling through new public parks and restored habitat (see diagram to the right). On the northeastern bank, the esplanade culminates in a capstone waterfront project: the Center for Urban Waters. Doors open in April 2010, to the LEED Platinum, 50,000 sq ft research base for the State’s efforts to keep the Puget Sound productive and healthy for future generations. The Center will house the City’s Environmental Services Department, researchers from the University of Washington Tacoma and staff from Puget Sound Partnership.

Leveraging the close proximity to, and excellent views of the Foss, the Dome District redevelopment concept includes ideas for low impact development and direct engagement with the future generations. The Center will be the City’s Environmental Services Department, researchers from the University of Washington Tacoma and staff from Puget Sound Partnership.

With a vision of a greener future, the Dome District can encourage developments to consider sustainable, creative solutions as well as challenge the City itself to take another look at existing environmental stewardship and educational opportunities for the public.

Goals and Actions

1 Urban design should make explicit the relationship between the Upland District and the Foss Waterway.

1.1 East C Street (or SEA Street; Street Edge Alternative) should provide a walkable corridor to the waterfront from event venues and future high density projects located near the Dome. This local connection will have minimal vehicular traffic and should make use of green street features with extensive tree planting, water features, and possible curbside bio-retention facilities (bio-swales for stormwater).

As part of this process, the City should seek grant funding or technical assistance from the Puget Sound Partnership and or the Center for Urban Waters to implement low impact street design.

1.2 Continue to work to connect Puylup Avenue to the Foss Waterway. A connection may be achieved as part of a redevelopment strategy associated with future commercial development at ‘A’ Street and Puylup Ave.

1.3 Plans have been developed for an Eastside waterfront park with a new connection to the water from 21st Street. Similarly, the Thea Foss Waterfront Development Authority has invested in a future site for a Westside waterfront park. To make the most out of these opportunities, the City should continue to negotiate with the BNSF to provide air rights for a connection between ‘K’ and ‘C’ Streets and/or find possible sites for potential redevelopment. A recommended location is illustrated on the Development Concept Vision Plan.

2. Leverage the Center for Urban Waters to develop venues for ecologically friendly design

2.1 The City should leverage the planned Center for Urban Waters and other district cultural venues such as the Dome and LeMay museum with additional public activities to create a connected loop of activity from the waterfront to the Dome.

2.2 Develop a water-oriented collaboration between artists, scientists and the community that is ecologically significant, free and open to the public and makes the best use of existing City property on the Dome District’s waterfront. The City-owned site is a sewer pump station that could be adapted with educational and public art components, focusing on remediation of the Foss and as the bookend to the ‘C’ Street (SEA) sustainable street. (Funding source private foundations; i.e. Ballet foundation- Russell Family Foundation.)

3 Work to reconnect the Ravine as a link between the Brewery District, Waterfront and the Tacoma Dome.

The greenway area below I-705 provides needed parking for the Foss waterway and Dome areas. Currently owned by WSDOT, the City should pursue a collaborative arrangement to ensure that this opportunity is not lost.

3.1 During ongoing transportation changes, the City should plan for the opportunity of a linked connection from the north to south. Wayfinding, and a well-marked pedestrian route can also better bring event participants to the waterfront from the lots. In addition, the City of Tacoma may wish to look to precedents such as under highway mountain bike and/or skate parks that turn these neglected areas into community assets.

4 Collaborate with property owners to ensure that towers and buildings are sited to best frame views of the Foss Waterway to the Le May Museum and public rights-of-way.
Draining from Mt. Rainier into the Puget Sound, the Puyallup River just to the east of the Foss waterway is home to significant populations of salmon. (Map: WA Dept. of Ecology)

Foss Waterway Authority is still working on a final concept for the waterfront park...stay tuned

An example of a successful urban garden in Belltown

The Foss Waterway reinvented

An example of a successful urban garden in Belltown

Curb side water filtration

Keeping salmon populations healthy through cleaner water

Work towards the integration of significant tree planting and/or biofiltration units to filter storm water. As street redevelops placement of new buildings back should make room for amenity.

Create a natural habitat/viable green space as part of existing sewer pump station - incorporate educational or learning facilities regarding waste/storm water

Tower placement should highlight and frame the view from Le May’s show field to the Foss.
This area, once called the Hawthorne Neighborhood, has shifted from residential row houses to manufacturing and industrial, to the current state of richly textured, working warehouses and large scale public infrastructure including the Tacoma Dome. With wide streets and relatively short blocks, the neighborhood is a natural walking environment.

The 2001 Dome Area Plan encourages development to integrate historic themes to raise awareness and build on the area’s identity. In particular:

- Puyallup Tribe presence
- Gasoline Alley – early 20th century automobile-oriented uses and structures
- Rail yards/transportation
- Tacoma Dome

“Puyallup Avenue will be re-invigorated with streetscape improvements and a vibrant mix of large retail establishments that serve the area’s regional base. The design of these new structures will play on the area’s early 20th Century automobile and industrial heritage, creating a unique and lively appearance despite the large scale.”

These policies have achieved general success as a creative influence for public artists, in particular the Tacoma Dome Station Park and Ride and the Palm Trees sculptures. Furthermore, the recent renovation of several historic buildings helps to retain the rich texture and historic scale of facades. During the redevelopment process, an eclectic set of one- and two-story light industrial and commercial/retail buildings will coexist with five- and six-story office and housing development. Residential towers are also envisioned. Similar to the Dome Area Plan (2001), the current development scenario includes maintaining a historic character along Puyallup Avenue, industrial character east of ‘G Street’ and a mix of uses in the core development areas near to the Dome.

The most important aspect to maintaining small scale infill will allow uses to adapt to new uses, and provide shared, off-site, easily accessible parking.

―To become more than a transportation center, there must be defining spaces and features that create a unique identity for the area. That identity could reflect some of the area’s cultural heritage through architecture and uses or further build upon the entertainment/destination attraction of the Tacoma Dome.” (Dome Area Plan 2001)

**Goals and Actions**

1. Start to work towards a historic building inventory as recommended in the 2001 Dome Area Plan.
2. Develop a district-wide shared parking scheme and work with partners to incentivize small scale infill development
3. Continue to support public art projects within the Dome District.
4. Encourage the adaptive re-use of historic structures, or make use of portions of buildings where wholesale preservation is not possible.
Integrate the Dome with Complementary Uses

This unique building is the largest freestanding wooden dome in the world. However, while many Tacomans see the Dome as a landmark, its design does not invite them to make use of it as a public space. Currently there are nearly 40 acres surrounding the Dome dedicated to surface parking, and a third of the Dome’s revenues are achieved through pay parking at events. How can the Dome and its surrounding parking lots be revitalized to make it meaningful for Tacomans throughout the city?

Over time, Tacoma Dome’s renovations will become more likely as a result of increased land values due to accessibility to transit, related TOD public/private partnerships and the associated LeMay museum. As such, the expansion of the Dome to the east of ‘D Street’ will react to and is highly dependent upon the final build out of the LeMay museum planned for Lot B and Lot C.

However in the short term, adding even one street-fronting establishment could help to humanize the scale of the Dome and enhance the walking environment for those arriving at events by public transit.

Goals and Actions

1  Continue to collaborate with the LeMay Museum to identify optimal pedestrian connections and improvements for the museum and its surrounding context.

1.1 The City should continue to work with the LeMay museum, paying particular attention to parking access, and pedestrian entrances from transit stations. Parking access and mobility are issues that will need to be balanced to create a sense of street enclosure along ‘D’ Street.

1.3 During on-going redevelopment the City should work with the Museum and property owners to develop a dynamic, framed view corridor to the Foss Waterway/Cable stay bridge.

1.4 The city should work with LeMay to ensure that the museum provides a high quality architectural feature at the I-5 view corridor as a gateway - particularly with height.

2  Extend the street grid into the Dome Lots to create walkable block lengths and a mixed-use development in Lot A.

All new plans for city-led development should be designed to integrate the Dome to the neighborhood through appropriately scaled blocks of an average 200 ft.

3  Continue to pursue renovations plans for a Dome expansion and consider ways to diversify revenue

Currently 1/3 of revenue is attached to parking

4  Provide a better connection between the Dome District and the street edge.

During renovation or redevelopment plans prioritize retail and entertainment uses on corners fronting ‘D Street’ to help provide a sense of street enclosure and encourage walking.

Extend 27th Street to create a complete street, and add connections to the south side of Freighthouse Square where feasible

SECTION AT E STREET

- An activated outdoor gathering space with at least two integrated uses.
- Make use of the Dome as an important element in the regional, but also the local cultural landscape.
- Add convention facilities and or a hotel to help bring 24 hour activity to the Dome area - dinner before/drinks after.
Based on the LeMay Collection, currently consisting of over 2,000 cars, the new Museum will ultimately house 1,000 diverse vehicles, spanning a century of automotive history.

Upon completion, this $100 million project will be the largest auto museum and attraction in the world and will bring some $34,000,000 to the local economy annually.