



**MINUTES** (Approved on 9-17-14)

**TIME:** Wednesday, August 20, 2014, 4:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Room 248, Tacoma Municipal Building  
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Sean Gaffney (Chair), Scott Winship (Vice-Chair), Donald Erickson, Benjamin Fields, Tina Lee, Alexandria Teague, Erle Thompson  
**ABSENT:** Chris Beale, Stephen Wamback

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Gaffney called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

**B. QUORUM CALL**

A quorum was declared.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting on August 6, 2014 were approved as submitted.

**D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. North Downtown Subarea Plan**

Cheri Gibbons, Planning Services Division, facilitated the Commissioners' review and consideration for approval of the draft Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report and the draft Letter of Recommendation. Discussion ensued, and the Commission made the following modifications to the draft North Downtown Subarea Plan:

- Remove the section describing the proposed Stadium Business District Boundary Revision from the Economic Development Chapter of the draft Plan. (By consensus among the Commissioners.)
- Revise Action LU-5 in the Land Use Chapter to read as: "Retain and add as many on-street parking spaces as feasible within the Stadium District without inhibiting future transit or multimodal improvements." (Adding the underlined words of "and add" by a unanimous vote.)
- Add a goal statement to the Mobility Chapter to read as: "Review the Reduced Parking Area boundaries in the North Downtown Subarea at such time as the Link Light Rail expansion through the district is in full operation or 2020, whichever is first." (A motion made by Commissioner Thompson and seconded by Commissioner Fields to change "as the Link Light Rail expansion through the district is in full operation" to "as the construction of the Link Light Rail expansion through the district begins" failed with a vote of 2 to 5.)
- Add to the Mobility Chapter a clarification regarding the "Designated Pedestrian Streets" to read as: "Pedestrian Streets do not preclude the use of other streets." (By a unanimous vote.)
- Made minor changes throughout the draft Plan, such as the revision of all maps throughout the Plan to reflect the revised Downtown Regional Growth Center, the restatement of "Recommendations" found throughout the Plan as "Actions", the addition of two Actions to the Historic Resource section supporting the rehabilitation of existing structures and ensuring the work is sensitive to the historic character of the structure and surrounding area, the addition of an

Action concerning Transportation Demand Management, and the addition of street classification type descriptions. (By consensus.)

- Modify Item #8 in the “Conclusions” section of the draft Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report to read as: “8. The Planning Commission further concludes that the proposed North Downtown Subarea Plan, as described above, is consistent with the Growth Management Act, will benefit the City as a whole, will not adversely affect the City’s public facilities and services, and ~~is~~ appears to be in the best interests of the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Tacoma.” (Changing “is” to “appears to be” by consensus.)

Commissioner Thompson made a motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Erickson, to approve and forward to the City Council for consideration the draft North Downtown Subarea Plan, as amended, the draft Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report, as amended, and the draft Letter of Recommendation, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

## **2. Mixed-Use Centers Review**

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, provided an overview of the scope of work for the Mixed-Use Centers (MUCs) Review, a continuation of one of the applications considered during the 2014 Annual Amendment process. He described the characteristics and purposes of MUCs, the foundation of the City’s growth strategy. He articulated on “The D’s for Walkable Centers”, i.e., Density, Destinations, Design, Distances, Demographics, and Distribution. He also described the scope of the market analysis that will be conducted and the coordination of this project with other current initiatives and projects.

Discussion ensued. The Commissioners provided the following questions, comments and suggestions:

- What are the goals and criteria for reducing the number of and prioritizing public investment in MUCs?
- Some Commissioners felt that 17 MUCs are too many, while others expressed that the number may not be as much as a problem if the centers are prioritized.
- Consider the cumulative impact of focusing resources within one or two areas as a demonstration for other neighborhoods.
- Express the greater good that performing centers provide for the whole City.
- We can learn from Vancouver, B.C.’s development strategy, including the timing, sequencing, phasing, and result-oriented of their public investment in designated centers.
- Consider reclassifying centers.
- Provide consideration for the automobile and the continued need for parking. Successful centers are also destinations that people drive to, such as 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Need explanation, rationale, and justification for why certain MUCs are prioritized more than others.
- “Density” may agitate people. We acknowledge the NIMBY concern of people, but we are designing MUCs not only for people that are living there, but also for people that are not there yet (i.e., people who choose to move here and our next generations).
- If basic necessities and amenities are available within an area, the area does not necessarily have to remain as a designated center.
- Conduct peer cities review.
- Ensure stakeholders’ involvement in the process.

## **3. Land Use Designation (Phase 2)**

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, provided an overview of the scope of work of the Land Use Designation Assessment and Amendment, a continuation of one of the applications considered during the 2013 Annual Amendment process. He presented a series of maps illustrating the discrepancies and inconsistencies between the existing zoning and the land use designation system that was adopted by the City Council in 2013. The maps serve to illustrate specific circumstances where inconsistencies between intensities and zoning have been prevalent, including parks and open spaces, education facilities, and planned residential developments. Other common circumstances include R-2 zoning

adjacent to commercial areas where the intensity suggests that more intensive zoning is appropriate and where there has been approved duplexes and neighborhood commercial in otherwise single family neighborhoods. He explained the approach and process for addressing the issues and that staff will be developing a general approach to addressing each type of common circumstance.

The Commission discussed the Growth Management Act requirements for internal consistency between the Plan and Code and whether any possible zoning amendments were required to be completed at the same time as the Land Use Designation amendments. In addition, the Commission had questions about zoning and differences in allowed use and densities.

#### **E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS**

The Commission acknowledged receipt of the following information:

- (a) Agenda for the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting, August 27, 2014.
- (b) Agenda for the Planning Commission meeting, September 3, 2014.

Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, provided the following information:

- (a) The Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability (IPS) Committee interviewed candidates for the Planning Commission's vacant positions on August 13, 2014 and made a recommendation to the City Council for reappointing Commissioners Winship and Thompson to the District No. 1 and Development Community positions, respectively, leaving two positions still open – Environmental Community and Public Transportation.
- (b) The IPS Committee encouraged the Planning Commissioners to be more actively involved in the Committee's meetings and discussions of relevant issues.
- (c) The City Council is scheduled to conduct a public hearing on September 16, 2014, concerning the proposed extension of the Recreational Marijuana Interim Regulations.

#### **F. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.