



**MINUTES** (Approved on 10-15-14)

**TIME:** Wednesday, September 17, 2014, 4:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North  
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**PRESENT:** Scott Winship (Vice-Chair), Chris Beale, Donald Erickson, Benjamin Fields, Tina Lee,  
Alexandria Teague, Stephen Wamback  
**ABSENT:** Sean Gaffney (Chair), Erle Thompson

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chair Winship 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 20, 2014 were reviewed. Commissioner Erickson noted that the word “what” should be corrected as “why” in the following bullet point under “2. Mixed-Use Centers Review”: “• Need explanation, rationale, and justification for what certain MUCs are prioritized more than others.” The minutes were approved with the minor correction as noted.

**D. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. Capital Facilities Program for 2015-2020**

Ebony Peebles, Office of Management and Budget, Finance Department, provided an overview of the proposed update of the 6-year Capital Facilities Program (CFP) from 2013-2018 to 2015-2020. The primary changes were the removal and addition of capital projects. The added projects varied in sizes and locations and were grouped in the following categories: Municipal Facilities; Paths & Trails, Bicycle and Pedestrian Access; Public Safety Facilities; Streets Projects; Tacoma Dome; Tacoma Rail; and Thea Foss Waterway. Ms. Peebles provided a brief description of each category and which “Comprehensive Plan Tie-in Questions” the projects within the category collectively are meeting and consistent with.

The Commissioners expressed some concerns and reservations, including:

- It is not clear how the capital projects are selected and prioritized and the Planning Commission is being asked to forward these projects to the City Council without an opportunity to provide input.
- There are questions about the funding sources and availability and the implications of tax for major projects, such as the Puyallup River Bridge Replacement, and improvements projects of the Tacoma Rail and the Tacoma Dome.
- There is a lack of in-depth analysis on how the proposed projects are consistent with and implement the Comprehensive Plan. While it is indicated that every project meets at least one of the “Comprehensive Plan Tie-in Questions”, it is not clear how the conclusion is arrived at. It is also not clear whether projects that meet more Tie-in Questions than others are assigned more “weights” in the decision for funding prioritization and allocations.
- There should be a wish list that captures potential projects, such as Urban Forestry related projects, with appropriate rationale and explanations for why these projects are being considered.

- What is the value of and need for the Planning Commission's review of the CFP if the City Council decides on its own on selecting, prioritizing and funding of capital projects?
- Staff should organize a work session for the Commission to revisit the capital facilities planning process, the selection and prioritization of capital projects, and how the CFP interfaces with the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion ensued. Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Divisions, indicated that as a planning tool the CFP is but one piece of the puzzle in the City's budgetary deliberation; that the Commission is expected to deliver its recommendation on the CFP in a timely manner in order for the City Council to meet the statutory requirements, and the associated tight schedule, for adopting the biennial budget; and that the changes to the CFP primarily pertain to the removal and addition of capital projects, and no amendments to capital facilities related policies in the Comprehensive Plan are being proposed. Mr. Wung suggested that the Commission consider setting October 1, 2014 as the date for a public hearing on the draft CFP; that staff will prepare a letter of recommendation properly reflecting the Commission's concerns and reservations for the Commission's consideration after the public hearing; and that staff will set up a workshop in the near future to facilitate the Commission's further discussion on this matter. The Commission concurred, with a unanimous vote.

## **2. 2015 Annual Amendment – Assessment Report**

Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division, facilitated the Commission's review of the draft 2015 Annual Amendment Assessment Report. The report provided an overview of the following 11 applications (or proposals) for consideration during 2014-2015 as well as staff's observations and comments concerning each application:

- #2015-01 2015 GMA Update
- #2015-02 Mixed-Use Centers Review
- #2015-03 McKinley Mixed-Use Center Boundary Expansion (private application)
- #2015-04 Land Use Designations (Phase 2)
- #2015-05 Critical Areas Preservation Code Update
- #2015-06 Transportation Master Plan
- #2015-07 Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element
- #2015-08 Affordable Housing Planning Work Program (Phase 3)
- #2015-09 Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (Phase 2)
- #2015-10 Code Cleanup
- #2015-11 West Slope Neighborhood Conservation District

The Commission had some comments and concerns regarding Application #2015-03 McKinley Mixed-Use Center Boundary Expansion. The Commission acknowledged that the application was essentially the same as the one submitted by the same applicant in 2008 (Application #2008-01) that had been denied by the Planning Commission at the time. Application #2008-01 was denied primarily because (a) the expansion area had been thoroughly evaluated in 2007 as a part of establishing the boundary for the then proposed McKinley Mixed-Use Center, but was not included in the center, partly in response to concerns expressed by residents during public outreach; and (b) the center should be allowed a period of time for redevelopment to occur, especially in the core areas of the center, before expanding its boundaries. The Commission believed that the rationale for denying Application #2008-01 continues to be valid and that consideration of any significant boundary expansions would be more appropriate after the city-wide, comprehensive Mixed-Use Center Review (Application #2015-02) is complete. Some Commissioners, however, suggested that Application #2015-03 should proceed as a stand-alone study against its own criteria and area-specific needs that may be different than those for the Mixed-Use Centers Review.

A vote was called for denying Application #2015-03 and postponing the review of it (if it is re-submitted later) until the completion of the Mixed-Use Centers Review. The vote passed with 6 Ayes to 1 Nay (Commissioner Wamback). The Commission also concurred with staff's suggestion to move the remaining 10 applications forward for technical analysis and approved of the draft Assessment Report accordingly. Mr. Wung stated that to accomplish the demanding workload associated with some of the

applications, such as the 2015 GMA Update and the Mixed-Use Centers Review, the scheduled completion of the 2015 Annual Amendment has been extended from June 2015 to October 2015. Commissioner Wamback suggested that if accomplishing all of the applications in a timely manner becomes an issue due to limited staffing resources, staff should come back to the Commission for reprioritization of the applications. The Commission concurred.

## **E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS**

The Commission acknowledged receipt of information regarding (a) the Tacoma 2025 Community Events on September 22, 24 and 29, 2014; (b) the City Council seeking citizens to fill two Planning Commission vacancies representing “Environmental Community” and “Public Transportation.”; (c) agenda items for the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee’s meeting on September 24, 2014; and (d) agenda items for the Planning Commission’s meeting on October 1, 2014.

Mr. Boudet provided that the *Conversation RE: Tacoma 2014 Lecture Series* begins on September 18, 2014 and that the Billboard Community Working Group will begin meeting on September 22, 2014. Regarding the Commission’s vacancies, Mr. Boudet encouraged the Commissioners to help on recruiting citizens – not only those with appropriate qualifications but preferably those who can add cultural and ethnic diversity to the Commission.

Commissioner Wamback, the Commission’s designated representative to the Billboard Community Working Group, mentioned that according to the draft mission statement, the group is being asked to develop alternatives different from the current code, but not necessarily to help decide whether and how the current code should be enforced. He advised the Commission that while he is supportive of the mission statement, he may not be allowed the opportunity to accomplish what the Commission had tasked him with, i.e., defending the regulations previously recommended by the Commission.

Commissioner Fields encouraged the Commissioners to attend the American Institute of Architects Regional Conference in Tacoma on October 2–4, 2014. He will talk to the AIA officials to reduce the registration rate for the Commissioners.

## **F. JOINT MEETING WITH THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

### **Transportation Commission Members Present:**

Justin Leighton, Jane Moore, Yoshi Kumara, Andrew Strobel, John Thurlow, Mike Hutchinson, Kristina Walker, Judi Hyman, Vance Lelli, Jacki Skaught

### **1. Call to Order:**

At 5:25 p.m., Vice-Chair Winship and Co-Chairs of the Transportation Commission, Justin Leighton and Jane Moore, called the joint meeting to order. Self-introduction was made. Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, stated the importance of bringing the two commissions together as the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) paves the way for significant efforts as the city updates its Comprehensive Plan. Josh Diekmann, Public Works Department, introduced Kendra Breiland and Justin Resnick from the consulting team, Fehr & Peers.

### **2. Overview of the TMP:**

Ms. Breiland provided an overview of the TMP efforts to date. Key principles include: planning for all road users, complete streets/networks, using the full public right-of-way, being sensitive to the context of streets across the city, and building realistic expectations for different users on different streets. The TMP is about half way through the process and the consultant team is starting to pull all the pieces together for a draft by the end of the year. The Transportation Commission has been reviewing all of the individual modal networks and will begin laying them together in October. The plan will bring everything together using the Layered Network concept to form level of service standards and determine system investments.

### 3. Draft Goals and Policies:

Mr. Resnick facilitated the commissions' review of the draft goals and policies of the TMP, focusing on Goal #6 and the nine (9) associated policies (Policies 6.9 to 6.1, in reversing order), concerning land use. The Commissioners brought up the following comments, concerns, questions, and suggestions:

#### General

- The Mobility Master Plan (MoMaP) contains good policies and action plans. Will it be replaced with the new TMP, incorporated into the new TMP, or removed?  
*(Justin Resnick ("JR") Response: Meetings with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group (BPTAG) specifically focused on bringing policies and goals from the MoMaP into the TMP Goals and Policies, which are then incorporated in the Transportation Element.)*
- Show the work on what existing policies in the Transportation Element (especially the MoMaP section) and other relevant elements of the Comprehensive Plan have been removed and not included in the draft TMP, and what policies have been incorporated into the draft TMP with or without modifications.  
*(JR: We have pulled some policies from MoMaP directly into this document while others have been adapted into other policies, but the consultants will provide a roadmap.)*

#### Policy 6.9 Parking Management (derived from Policy T-TSM-5 in the Transportation Element, along with the proposed removal of a conflicting policy LU-MU-1 from the Land Use Element)

- Wouldn't we want to limit parking downtown?  
*(JR: The policy does not specify exactly how parking management will be performed Downtown, but specifies that parking stakeholders should determine how this is done.)*
- Remove the reference to "outside of growth centers" from the policy as it makes it seem like we're not trying to limit parking inside of mixed-use centers.

#### Policy 6.8 Development Incentives

- Redundant of what is already in the Land Use Element.  
*(JR: Just meant to reference that policy in the LU Element. We can add a direct reference.)*

#### Policy 6.7 Mixed-Use Centers

- No comments.

#### Policy 6.6 Transit Oriented Development

- No comments.

#### Policy 6.5 Street Rights-of-Way (referring to how the city will act and employ their powers over street rights of way, such as the situation when the city needs to take land)

- What about other purposes than transportation or recreation for trees or other elements? Are trees infrastructure? Specify that this policy can include planter strips for example. Recreational purposes don't directly specify this.
- Would parklets be covered under this policy? I understand that City of Olympia prohibited "business transactions" which kept it under a public realm.
- Actual policy is buried in the first implementation step. Policies should clearly be policing something, and if there is an action, make sure it is clearly defined. "Establish procedures" is an implementation step. First step is actually the policy of "preserving ROW"; state that first.

#### Policy 6.4 Supporting Growth Centers

- Define "growth centers", if not already done. Add a definition section to clarify many of these terms (e.g., 20-Minute Neighborhoods).
- We should define terms and specify what we mean by growth centers vs. what the PSRC or city may mean by growth centers.

Policy 6.3 20-Minute Neighborhoods

- Synonymous with neighborhood centers? Artificial distances that can be covered in 20-minutes, especially with Stadium District, there are many older people that are not at the average speed. *(JR: Well-taken point. Took a broader size of 20-minute to err towards being inclusive, in order to keep the shed as expanded as possible. May look at the core first of the 20-min neighborhoods. Didn't want to cut off the edges arbitrarily.)*
- There is value in identifying the neighborhoods, as is it helps prioritize projects that are clearly within a watershed given terrain constraints.
- Outlining the “3-Ds” (Density, Distance and Destinations) is good. Overarching thought: do we have a policy on street grid layout, such as discouraging cul-de-sacs, etc.?
- Policy 3.3 provides the language “strongly discourages cul-de-sacs”.

Policy 6.2 Land Use Patterns

- Would like to have this called out and highlighted. Be more specific about opportunities to live near the workplace because jobs-housing balance can still require a lot of travel if jobs and housing for individuals are not located in the same place.

Policy 6.1 Land Use Considerations (When development will have an effect on the transportation system, this will go into concurrency.)

- Through the Downtown Subarea plans, didn't we decide that there's no concurrency plan? So the last sentence speaks to impact fees that may be in conflict with the Subarea plans. Thought that first 10 years, there wouldn't be impact fees. *(Josh Diekmann Response: The city may have to look at impact fees to pay for the growth if the subarea plan growth is realized. Even if we rely on other modes, we'll have to make improvements to the other modes to accommodate growth. Certain quantity of development that can be accommodated for now, once thresholds are reached, impact fees/improvements may be needed.)*
- We're looking at 30 million square feet of new development, 30,000 jobs and 60,000 people in each of the three subarea plans planning areas (South Downtown, Hilltop and North Downtown). That will happen before we start to look at improvements. This will be part of a programmatic environmental review system, where new development will not have to pay for growth as it falls within the original 30 million square feet of development. Public wanted that development. But we are giving up the last sentence in Policy 6.1, so we must be clear that we're creating a controversy artificially.
- Was decision made on whether to do red-yellow-green or ABCDEF for LOS standards? *(JR: Transit may be four levels, but that decision has not been made. Overall, we are leaning towards something that is digestible.)* *(Kendra Breiland Response: Red-yellow-green works, but nothing says that all modes must be parallel, so we want something that will be easy to implement.)*
- We wanted to add LOS and don't want it to conflict with other elements of the plan or other EIS documents. The A through F scheme is the standard most commonly known, so may be unclear if there is a new standard.

**4. 20-Minute Neighborhoods:**

Ms. Moore provided an overview on 20-minute neighborhoods, and the work with the (BPTAG). BPTAG picked the 20-minute neighborhood concept to help develop the pedestrian network. It helps capture all of the activities that people walk to within Mixed-Use Centers (MUCs), parks, etc. Mr. Resnick summarized the “3-Ds” factors that were used for the 20-minute neighborhood analysis, which is based on research from cities such as Portland. The factors include population Density, Destinations that are attractive for walking, and friction of Distance for walking. He displayed maps showing how suitable areas of Tacoma are for walking today, and moving to the future, allocating all of the 2040 land use growth, which is primarily to the MUCs. Ms. Moore acknowledged that not everyone can walk a mile in 20 minutes, but it's

a good conservative standard that expands the area that is analyzed, rather than restricting it. The commissioners provided the following comments, concerns, questions and suggestions:

- For the MUCs that have no development and are stagnant, will the areas that are red and within MUCs be the focus regardless of how the MUC actually is developing?  
*(JR: Input on potential removal of MUCs from accepting certain levels of growth can be accounted for and shifted.)*
- What about the Point Ruston MUC?  
*(Stephen Atkinson (“SA”) Response: The Point Ruston MUC was recently approved so that will be updated. The 20-minute neighborhoods analysis is an analytical tool that Makers, the consultant for the MUCs Review, can use as part of the land use element update. This work will help with marketing the city to identify neighborhoods that are walkable and vibrant. It also helps point out where there are growth deficiencies (TCC being a good example) so this will help inform the MUCs review.)*
- What is happening to the neighborhoods that have high potential now, but not in the future? The southwest corner of the city is a good example near Narrows Marina and there are a few other sections.  
*(JR: The model may be sensitive to areas where there aren’t businesses now, but retail moves in and it shifts the intensity dot. Certainly the check of these is needed. This analysis is only used for guidance and isn’t the end-all-be-all method for prioritization.)*  
*(SA: The factors were all weighted evenly, and perhaps some calibration may help to adjust weights.)*
- Does the analysis account for the current LU growth figures?  
*(SA: It has incorporated the buildable lands analysis, the subarea plans, and the transportation modeling. A lot of the red in those centers shows that more density has been planned for.)*
- There are some “high potential” areas that are outside of the MUC, so is the zoning set to accommodate that demand?  
*(JR: We will check on whether those areas are zoned for that level of LU growth.)*
- What about the area that has high red on the east side of the waterway? Are we trying to make that a 20-minute neighborhood?  
*(JR: The areas we are focused on, which are not all of the areas that are red, are the arterials and collectors within the 20-minute neighborhoods.)*
- The 20-min neighborhood concept is appealing and works well with the MUC policy discussion they are having as a PC. Hoping that both staffs can work together on this. 20-minute neighborhoods are really a land use planning element, even more than transportation. Appreciative of work done, but let’s make sure nothing is being repeated.
- How will the timing of the MUC update work with the TMP update and the 20-minute neighborhoods?  
*(SA: The intent over the next 6 months is to develop the analytical work to answer whether zoning or boundaries need to be changed for the MUCs to prioritize resources. There is crossover from the transportation side and the LU side.)*
- Does any mapping done in the TMP need to be reviewed after being adopted to fit with the MUC update process?  
*(SA: That is something that can be revisited.)*
- Land use should drive the transportation network, so communication should continue between the Planning Commission and the Transportation Commission, and with other stakeholders, to ensure consistency.

Ms. Breiland indicated that 20-minute neighborhoods were used to prioritize where pedestrian improvements should go. We’ll also be looking at transit/bike/auto priority as well and the 20-minute neighborhoods as a tool as part of that prioritization. The maps will have language to convey that. The 20-minute neighborhoods will not be the only driver of the pedestrian network.

## 5. Adjournment:

At 6:43 p.m., the joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the Transportation Commission was concluded. The Planning Commission adjourned, while the Transportation Commission continued to conduct its regular business.