Single-Family Zones

As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan
Qualities associated with single-family residential designations that are desirable include: low noise levels, limited traffic, large setbacks, private yards, small scale buildings, and low-density development. Community facilities, such as parks, schools, day cares, and religious facilities are also desirable components of residential neighborhoods. Limited allowances for other types of residential development are also provided for in the single family designation with additional review to ensure compatibility with the desired, overarching single-family character. In some instances, such as the HMR-SRD, areas designated for single family residential development have an historic mix of residential densities and housing types which should be maintained while allowing for continued expansion of housing options consistent with the single family designation.

Target Development Density: 6–12 dwelling units/acre

Multi-family Zones (low-density)

As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan
This district enjoys many of the same qualities as single-family neighborhoods such as low traffic volumes and noise, larger setbacks, and small-scale development, while allowing for multi-family uses and increased density along with community facilities and institutions. The Multi-Family (low-density) district can often act as a transition between the single-family designation and the greater density and higher intensity uses that can be found in the Multi-Family (high density designation) or commercial or mixed use designations. This designation is more transit-supportive than the Single Family Residential areas and is appropriate along transit routes and within walking distance of transit station areas.

Target Development Density: 14–36 dwelling units/acre

Multi-family Zones (high-density)

As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan
This designation allows for a wide range of residential housing types at medium and higher density levels, along with community facilities and institutions, and some limited commercial uses and mixed-use buildings. It is characterized by taller buildings, higher traffic volumes, reduced setbacks, limited private yard space, and greater noise levels. These areas are generally found in the central city and along major transportation corridors where there is increased access to public transportation and to employment centers.

Target Development Density: 45–75 dwelling units/acre
**Zone Description**

The R-1 district is intended for a typical neighborhood with only single family dwelling units. It is most appropriate in established areas with a relatively quiet and stable neighborhood environment. The R-1 has low traffic volumes, larger lot sizes and may be part of a View Sensitive Overlay district.

*Left and above: large lot single-family homes typical of R-1*

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**Zone Description**

The R-2 is the most common residential zoning district in the City. This district is intended for single-family detached housing. This district permits all uses allowed in an R-1 and may also allow for lodging uses limited to one guest room. It generally abuts more intense residential and commercial districts.

*Left and above: while large lots are still predominant, some infill of smaller more tightly clustered lots support a range of single-family dwellings*

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**Land-Use Diagrams**

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**Zone** | **Code Section** | **Use** | **Min. Standard Lot Area (sf)** | **Min. Small Lot Area (sf)** | **Min. Standard lot width (ft)** | **Min. Small lot width (ft)** | **Max. Height (ft)** | **Setback Front (ft)** | **Setback Side (ft)** | **Setback Rear (ft)**  
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---  
R-1 | TMC13.06.100... | Single-Family | 7,500 | 6,750 | 50 | 45 | 35 | 25 | 7.5 | 25  
R-2 | TMC13.06.100... | Single-Family | 5,000 | 4,500 | 35 | 35 | 35 | 20 | 5 | 25  

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**Zone Description**

The R-2SRD district is very similar to the R-2 district, however it allows a limited number of two and three-family dwellings, subject to conditional use permitting. Some preexisting multi-family dwellings may also exist in this district.

Left: Larger lot single family. Below: a recent two-family construction designed to reflect neighborhood character

---

**Zone Description**

The HMR-SRD district is designed to apply to existing neighborhood areas or portions of existing neighborhood areas which have been designated as an historic special review district because the buildings within reflect significant aspects of Tacoma’s early history, architecture and culture. Single-family dwellings are the predominant land use within the HMR-SRD district.

Above: a historic home as are common in this zone. Below: a recent two-family construction designed to reflect neighborhood character

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**SPECIAL REVIEW DISTRICT**

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MULTI-FAMILY LOW-RISE RESIDENTIAL ZONING SUMMARY

R-3 Two-Family District

Zone Description
The R-3 district is intended for one, two, and three family dwellings. Some lodging and boarding homes are also appropriate. The R-3 district is characterized by low residential traffic volumes and generally abuts more intense residential and commercial districts.

R-4L Low-Density Multi-Family District

Zone Description
The R-4L district is intended for low-density multiple-family housing, retirement homes, and group living facilities. The R-4L district is very similar to the R-4 district, but has more restrictive site development standards which are intended to minimize adverse impacts of permitted and conditional uses on adjoining land.

Land-Use Diagrams
# Multi-Family Zoning Summary

## R-4 Multi-Family District

**Zone Description**
The R-4 district is intended for medium-density multiple-family housing. Other appropriate uses may include day care centers, and certain types of special needs housing. The R-4 district is located generally along major transportation corridors and between higher and lower intensity uses.

*Left: two examples of low rise multi-family buildings that are typical in the R-4 zoning*

## R-5 Multi-Family District

**Zone Description**
The R-5 district is intended for high-density multiple family housing and also permits residential hotels, retirement homes, and limited mixed-use buildings. The district is generally located in the center of the city in close proximity to employment centers, conveniences, services, major transportation corridors, and public transportation facilities. Minor retail businesses such as drug stores, personal services such as beauty salons, and minor eating and drinking establishments are also permitted in the R-5 district.

*Above: not many examples of R-5 zone exist in Tacoma as mid to high-rise construction is primarily in mixed-use zones*

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### Special Review District

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Neighborhood Commercial Zones

As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan
This designation is characterized primarily by small-scale neighborhood businesses with some residential and institutional uses. Uses within these areas have low to moderate traffic generation, shorter operating hours, smaller buildings and sites, and less signage than general commercial or mixed-use areas. There is a greater emphasis on small businesses and development that is compatible with nearby, lower intensity residential areas.

Target Development Density: 14-36 dwelling units/acre

General Community Commercial

Intent of the General Community Commercial
As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan
This designation encompasses areas for medium to high intensity commercial uses which serves a large community base with a broad range of larger scale uses. These areas also allow for a wide variety of residential development, community facilities, institutional uses, and some limited production and storage uses. These areas are generally located along major transportation corridors, often with reasonably direct access to a highway. This designation is characterized by larger-scale buildings, longer operating hours, and moderate to high traffic generation.

Target Development Density: 45–75 dwelling units/acre
## T Transitional District

**Zone Description**
Transitional Districts are intended to serve as a transition between commercial or industrial areas and residential areas. The area is characterized by lower traffic generation, fewer operation hours, smaller scale buildings and less signage that general commercial areas. Permitted uses include small-scale office space, daycares, schools, parks, religious facilities, group housing, and retirement homes.

*Left: A mix of commercial and residential typologies are found in the T Zone*

### C-1 General Neighborhood Commercial

**Zone Description**
The C-1 district contains low-intensity, smaller-scale land uses such as retail, office, and service uses. All uses permitted in the Transitional District are also permitted in the C-1 district with the addition of fueling stations. Building sizes are limited for compatibility with surrounding residential areas.

*Left:*

### Land-Use Diagrams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Code Section</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Area (sf)</th>
<th>Bldg. Coverage (%)</th>
<th>Maximum height (ft)</th>
<th>Setback Front (ft)</th>
<th>Setback Side (ft)</th>
<th>Setback Rear (ft)</th>
<th>Maximum Floor Area (sf)</th>
<th>Tree Canopy (%)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>TMC13.06.200</td>
<td>N/A or 1,500SF/res. unit</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20,000SF</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-1</td>
<td>TMC13.06.200.C.5</td>
<td>N/A or R-4L for residential</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30,000SF</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Zone Description
The C-2 district is similar to the C-1 district however it is intended to serve a larger market area. Higher-intensity uses of the permitted uses in the C-1 district are allowed in the C-2 district.

Left: two examples of low rise multi-family buildings that are typical in the R-4 zoning

PDB Planned Development Business

Zone Description
PDB districts are intended to provide limited areas for a mix of land uses that include warehousing, distribution, light assembly, media, education, research, and limited commercial. Retail uses are size limited and signage is reduced. Sites in the PDB district should have reasonably direct access to a highway or major arterial.

Above: not many examples of R-5 zone exist in Tacoma as mid to high-rise construction is only in mixed-use zones

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Land-Use Diagrams
INDUSTRIAL ZONES

Light Industrial

As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan
This designation allows for a variety of industrial uses that are moderate in scale and impact, with lower noise, odors and traffic generation than heavy industrial uses. This designation may include various types of light manufacturing and warehousing and newer, clean and high-tech industries, along with commercial and some limited residential uses. These areas are often utilized as a buffer or transition between heavy industrial areas and less intensive commercial and/or residential areas.

Heavy Industrial

Intent of the General Community Commercial
As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan
This designation is characterized by higher levels of noise and odors, large-scale production, large buildings and sites, extended operating hours, and heavy truck traffic. This designation requires access to major transportation corridors, often including heavy haul truck routes and rail facilities. Commercial and institutional uses are limited and residential uses are generally prohibited.
Zone Description
M-1 Light Industrial District. This district is intended as a buffer between heavy industrial uses and less intensive commercial and or residential uses. M-1 districts may be established in new areas of the City. However, this classification is only appropriate inside Comprehensive Plan areas designated for medium and high intensity uses.

Left: two examples of low rise multi-family buildings that are typical in the R-4 zoning

Land-Use Diagrams

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INDUSTRIAL ZONING SUMMARY

M-2 Heavy Industrial District

Zone Description
M-2 Heavy Industrial District. 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. This classification is only appropriate inside Comprehensive Plan areas designated for medium and high intensity uses.

PMI Port Maritime & Industrial District

Zone Description
PMI Port Maritime & Industrial District. This district is intended to allow all industrial uses and uses that are not permitted in other districts, barring uses that are prohibited by City Charter. The Port of Tacoma facilities, facilities that support the Port’s operations, and other public and private maritime and industrial activities make up a majority of the uses in this district. This area is characterized by proximity to deep water berthing; sufficient backup land between the berths and public right-of-ways; 24-hour operations to accommodate regional and international shipping and distribution schedules; raw materials processing and manufacturing; uses which rely on the deep water berthing to transport raw materials for processing or manufacture, or transport of finished products; and freight mobility infrastructure, with the entire area served by road and rail corridors designed for large, heavy truck and rail loads.

The PMI District is further characterized by heavy truck traffic and higher levels of noise and odors than found in other districts. The uses are primarily marine and industrial related, and include shipping terminals, which may often include container marshaling and inter-modal yards, chemical manufacturing and distribution, forest product operations (including shipping and wood and paper products manufacturing), warehousing and/or storage of cargo, and boat and/or ship building/repair. Retail and support uses primarily serve the area’s employees. Expansion beyond current PMI District boundaries should be considered carefully, as such expansion may decrease the distance between incompatible uses. Expansion should only be considered contiguous to the existing PMI District. This classification is only appropriate inside Comprehensive Plan areas designated for high intensity uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Code Section</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Area (sf)</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Width (ft)</th>
<th>Bldg. Coverage (%)</th>
<th>Maximum height (ft)</th>
<th>Setback Front (ft)</th>
<th>Setback Side (ft)</th>
<th>Setback Rear (ft)</th>
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<td>Heavy Industrial</td>
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<td>PMI</td>
<td>Heavy Industrial</td>
<td>TMC 13.06.400..</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above: not many examples of R-5 zone exist in Tacoma as mid to high-rise construction is only in mixed-use zones
MIXED-USE ZONES

Crossroads Center

As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan

The crossroads center is a concentration of commercial and/or institutional development that serves many nearby neighborhoods and generally includes a unique attraction that draws people from throughout the city. Some residential development may already be present, and there is a goal to have more residential development. It is directly accessible by arterials and local transit. Pedestrian accessibility is important within the center, but because of its focus on larger scale commercial development, the crossroads center continues to provide for automobile parking, preferably within structures.

Min. Allowable Development Density: 25 dwelling units/net acre

Neighborhood Center

Intent of the General Community Commercial
As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan

The neighborhood center is a concentrated mix of small- to medium-scale development that serves the daily needs of center residents, the immediate neighborhood, and areas beyond. Development contains a mix of residential and commercial uses, and the majority of parking is provided within structures. Buildings are generally up to six stories along the commercial corridors, up to three stories at the periphery of the centers near single-family districts, and up to four stories in areas between the core and the periphery. They are designed with a compatible character to adjacent residential neighborhoods. The design of the neighborhood center encourages pedestrians and bicyclists and its location on a major arterial makes it a convenient and frequent stop for local transit. The regional transit network also may directly serve some neighborhood centers.

Min. Allowable Development Density: 25 dwelling units/net acre

Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center

Intent of the General Community Commercial
As described in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan

The Tacoma Mall is a highly dense self-sufficient concentration of urban development. Buildings can range from one to twelve stories and activity is greater than in most areas of the city. It is an area of regional attraction and a focus for both the local and regional transit systems. Many major city arterials connect to the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center and nearby freeway access is present. Parking is provided both in surface lots and within structures. Internal streets and pathways provide connections among the developments within the center.

Minimum Allowable Site Density: 25 dwelling units/net acre
NRX Neighborhood Residential Mixed-Use District

**Zone Description**
NRX Neighborhood Residential Mixed-Use District. To provide for a predominantly residential neighborhood, to discourage removal of existing single-family residential structures; and to encourage in-fill residential development of appropriate size and design. This district is designed for areas characterized by an established mix of housing types and limited neighborhood commercial uses, in areas which were formerly zoned to permit residential development at densities greater than single-family, where redevelopment removed many existing single-dwelling structures and where there is continued development pressure that threatens single-family dwellings. Adaptive reuse of existing single-family detached structures as duplexes or triplexes is permitted with special review. Multiple-family dwellings in existence at the time of reclassification to NRX are conforming uses.

RCX Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District

**Zone Description**
RCX Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District. To provide sites for medium- and high-intensity residential development in centers, with opportunities for limited mixed use. This district is primarily residential in nature and provides housing density on the perimeter of more commercial mixed-use zones. Commercial uses in this district are small in scale and serve the immediate neighborhood. These uses provide opportunities for employment close to home. This district frequently provides a transition area to single-family neighborhoods.

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MIXED-USE ZONING SUMMARY

HMX Hospital Medical Mixed-Use District

Zone Description
HMX Hospital Medical Mixed-Use District. This district is intended for limited areas that contain hospitals and/or similar large-scale medical facilities along with a dense mix of related and supportive uses, such as outpatient medical offices, care facilities, counseling and support services, medical equipment and support facilities, food and lodging. Residential uses are also appropriate. The district includes limitations on non-medical and non-related uses. It is not intended for introduction into areas not containing or non-contiguous to a hospital or similar facility. Walking and transit use is facilitated through designs which decrease walking distances and increase pedestrian safety. This classification is not appropriate inside Comprehensive Plan designated low-intensity areas.

URX Urban Residential Mixed-Use District

Zone Description
URX Urban Residential Mixed-Use District. To provide sites for medium intensity residential development, such as townhouses, condos and apartments. This district is residential in nature and provides housing density in proximity to more

Above: not many examples of R-5 zone exist in Tacoma as mid to high-rise construction is only in mixed-use zones
Zone Description
CCX Community Commercial Mixed-Use District. To provide for commercial and retail businesses intended to serve many nearby neighborhoods and draw people from throughout the City. These areas are envisioned as evolving from traditional suburban development to higher density urban districts. Walking and transit use are facilitated through designs which decrease walking distances and increase pedestrian safety. Uses include shopping centers with a wide variety of commercial establishments; commercial recreation; gas stations; and business, personal, and financial services. Residential uses are encouraged in CCX Districts as integrated development components.

Zone Description
CCX Commercial Industrial Mixed-Use District. To provide sites for a mix of commercial establishments and limited industrial activities, including light manufacturing, assembly, distribution, and storage of goods, but no raw materials processing or bulk handling. Larger scale buildings are appropriate. Residential uses are permitted.

Zone Description
CIX Commercial Industrial Mixed-Use District. To provide sites for a mix of commercial establishments and limited industrial activities, including light manufacturing, assembly, distribution, and storage of goods, but no raw materials processing or bulk handling. Larger scale buildings are appropriate. Residential uses are permitted.

Zone Description
CIX Commercial Industrial Mixed-Use District. To provide sites for a mix of commercial establishments and limited industrial activities, including light manufacturing, assembly, distribution, and storage of goods, but no raw materials processing or bulk handling. Larger scale buildings are appropriate. Residential uses are permitted.

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**Zone Description**

**NCX Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use District**

NCX Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use District. To provide areas primarily for immediate day-to-day convenience shopping and services at a scale that is compatible and in scale with the surrounding neighborhood, including local retail businesses, professional and business offices, and service establishments. This district is intended to enhance, stabilize, and preserve the unique character and scale of neighborhood centers and require, where appropriate, continuous retail frontages largely uninterrupted by driveways and parking facilities with street amenities and direct pedestrian access to the sidewalk and street. Residential uses are encouraged as integrated components in all development.

**UCX Urban Center Mixed-Use District**

UCX Urban Center Mixed-Use District. To provide for dense concentration of residential, commercial, and institutional development, including regional shopping centers, supporting business and service uses, and other regional attractions. These centers are to hold the highest densities outside the Central Business District. An urban center is a focus for both regional and local transit systems. Walking and transit use is facilitated through designs which decrease walking distances and increase pedestrian safety. Residential uses are encouraged in UCX Districts as integrated development components.

**MIXED-USE ZONING SUMMARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone Description</th>
<th>NCX Neighborhood Commercial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Code Section</td>
<td>TMC13.06.300..</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>TMC13.06.300.D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum Lot Area (sf)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bldg. Coverage (%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum height (ft)</td>
<td>45 feet; 65 feet in the Stadium District of the DRGC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setback Front (ft)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setback Side (ft)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setback Rear (ft)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min. Density (units/Acre)</td>
<td>30; 40 on designated pedestrian streets. See Section 13.06.300.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Floor Area (sf)</td>
<td>30,000 square feet per business; 45,000 square feet for full service grocery stores only; offices shall be exempt from these limits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NCX Building Envelope in Stadium District**

**UCX Building Envelope**

**Photos:** Two examples of low rise multi-family buildings that are typical in the R-4 zoning.