The City of Tacoma is preparing a South Downtown Subarea Plan to set a vision for growth and development in the south downtown area of Tacoma. As part of that plan, the City is preparing a non-project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate how the subarea plan might impact environmental and infrastructure resources in the area, as well as how those impacts might be mitigated.

One of the first steps in preparing an EIS is to conduct a scoping process to ask citizens and organizations for their concerns, comments and ideas. The City of Tacoma is hosting a public scoping period to gather public comments on the issues and opportunities that should be the focus of the EIS. The public scoping comment period will last from December 5, 2011 through January 10, 2012. Comments are welcome at the public scoping meeting on December 15, 2011, or anytime during the comment period through email or mail.

*The EIS will include properties owned by the Foss Waterway Development Authority.*

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**Join Us for a PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:**

**South Downtown Subarea Plan**

This is your opportunity to participate in the planning and environmental review process. Future appeals of proposed development that are consistent with the plan will be limited.

**How to Comment:**

Attend the public scoping meeting

**Date:** Thursday, December 15, 2011

**Location:** University of Washington Tacoma Carwein Auditorium Keystone Building, Room 102

**Time:** 4:00 – 7:00 pm

Provide written comments via mail

Community and Economic Development Dept.

747 Market Street, Room 1036

Tacoma, WA 98402

Provide comments via email

planning@cityoftacoma.org

For more information visit the project website:

www.cityoftacoma.org/planning

(click on Dome/Brewery District Subarea Plan & EIS)
What might up to 30 million square feet of new floor space look like in the south downtown area?

Dome District

Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the Dome District. Maximum building height of 120-225 feet with a minimum density of 30 units per acre. Minimal to no setbacks. Illustration shows an integrated, mixed use, 24-hour neighborhood.

Brewery District

Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the Brewery District. Maximum building height of 100 feet with urban density levels. Minimal to no setbacks.

Hillside Neighborhood in the Brewery District

Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the Hillside Neighborhood. Maximum building height of 90 feet with urban density levels. Minimal to no setbacks.

Nob Hill Neighborhood in the Brewery District

Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the Nob Hill Neighborhood. Maximum building height of 60 feet with medium residential density levels. 15 foot setbacks in the front and back, with 5 foot setbacks on the side. Requirement for 10% yard.

University of Washington Tacoma

Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed on the University of Washington Tacoma campus. Maximum building height of 100 feet with urban density levels. Minimal to no setbacks.

Foss Waterway

Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed along the Thea Foss Waterway. Maximum building height of 65-180 feet, with setbacks consistent with Tacoma’s Shoreline Master Program. Illustration shows an integrated neighborhood supporting residential, commercial and water oriented uses.

The general illustrations above are representative of the maximum building envelope that will be allowed under the proposed plan.
Determination of Significance, Notice of EIS' Public Scoping: and Public Scoping Meeting

Proponent: City of Tacoma (City) and the University of Washington Tacoma

Project Name: South Downtown Subarea Plan (including the Dome, Brewery, University of Washington Tacoma, Museum and Hillside Districts)

Background:

Funding -- The City of Tacoma has been awarded a grant from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) to carry out a demonstration project as part of PSRC's new program called "Growing Transit Communities: A Corridor Action Strategy for the Central Puget Sound Region." The Growing Transit Communities program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Transportation through a joint Sustainable Communities initiative. The Puget Sound Region is one of 45 communities in the U.S. that was awarded such a grant. PSRC's overall goal of the program is to integrate land use, economic, and transportation planning decisions to promote transit oriented communities along light rail corridors in the region.

Non-Project Environmental Review -- The City and the University of Washington will prepare a non-project environmental impact statement (EIS) for the South Downtown Subarea Plan. Completing a non-project EIS presents a cumulative impact analysis for the entire subarea, rather than piecemeal analysis of the environmental impacts and mitigation on a project-by-project basis. As a result, the environmental impacts and mitigation are comprehensively evaluated at the subarea-wide level. The non-project EIS also eliminates the need for subsequent environmental review associated with project-specific development proposals that are consistent with the subarea's development regulations. As such, the non-project EIS provides certainty and predictability for urban development proposals; thereby, streamlining the environmental review process within the subarea and encouraging the goals of SEPA\(^2\) and the State's Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW).

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1 EIS refers to environmental impact statement
2 Scoping is the first major step in preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS). It involves identifying the alternatives and the range of environmental issues that are to be analyzed in the EIS.
3 SEPA is the State Environmental Policy Act (Chapter 43.21C RCW). Regulations that implement SEPA are called the SEPA Rules (Chapter 197-11 WAC).
The City and the University of Washington have decided the non-project EIS will proceed under RCW 43.21C.420. Recognizing that RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b) include a sunset provision, the City and the University of Washington wish to also proceed under RCW 43.21C.031 (planned action) and RCW 43.21C.229 (infill exemption), providing the City with additional SEPA tools that the City may use if provisions in RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b) expire.

**Appeal and Noticing** -- For a non-project EIS completed under RCW 43.21C.420, the SEPA-based appeal opportunity occurs only in conjunction with issuance of the non-project Final EIS. Consistent with RCW 43.21C.420, a proposed development will not be subject to project-specific SEPA-based administrative or judicial appeals if the proposed development is (1) proposed within 10 years of the issuance of the subarea Final EIS, (2) situated within the subarea, and (3) consistent with the adopted subarea plan and development regulations. Similarly, there are no SEPA noticing requirements for subsequent, site-specific development or redevelopment within the subarea that is consistent with the subarea plan.

**Non-Project EIS Outreach Requirements** -- This optional EIS process has several community outreach components, notably:

- A community meeting on the proposed subarea plan must be held prior to issuance of the EIS Scoping notice for the proposed EIS. This meeting was held on December 1, 2011 at the University of Washington Tacoma – Carwein Auditorium:
  - notice of the proposed community meeting was mailed to all:
    - property owners of record within the subarea;
    - property owners within 400 feet of the boundaries of the subarea;
    - affected federally-recognized tribal governments whose ceded area is within one-half mile of the boundaries of the subarea;
    - agencies with jurisdiction* over future development within the subarea;
    - small businesses as defined in RCW 19.85.020; and
    - all preservation and development authorities established under chapter 43.167 RCW, TMC 13.12.560(D)(2).
  - notice of the community meeting included general illustrations and descriptions of buildings that are generally representative of the maximum building envelope that will be allowed under the subarea plan; and the
  - notice was posted on major travel routes within the subarea within seven days of the mailing of the meeting notice.

- This EIS Scoping Notice has been mailed (via first class mail) to all:
  - property owners of record within the subarea;
  - property owners within 400 feet of the boundaries of the subarea;
  - affected federally-recognized tribal governments whose ceded area is within one-half mile of the boundaries of the subarea;
  - agencies with jurisdiction over future development within the subarea;

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4 For SEPA compliance, an agency with jurisdiction is an agency with authority to approve, veto, or finance all or part of a project (see WAC 197-11-714 for more details).
o small businesses as defined in RCW 19.85.020;
o all preservation and development authorities established under chapter 43.167
RCW, TMC 13.12.560(D)(2);
o to neighborhood councils, qualified neighborhood or community organizations in
the site vicinity; and the
o Puyallup Tribe for substantial actions defined in the Agreement between the
Puyallup Tribe, Local Governments in Pierce County, the State of Washington,

• The EIS Scoping Notice was published in the Daily Journal of Commerce, the Tacoma
Daily Index, the University of Washington Daily and the University of Washington
Tacoma Ledger.

• Public information signs have been posted within the subarea.

In addition, a non-project EIS Scoping meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2011.5 Details of
the EIS Scoping meeting are noted on pg. 6 of this notice.

**Description of the Proposal:** The proposed project involves development of an
innovative, area-wide subarea plan for Tacoma's South Downtown Subarea, which will
become an optional element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Together with the subarea plan,
a non-project EIS is being prepared that will evaluate the probable adverse environmental
impacts associated with various alternatives that are part of the subarea plan and identify
measures that will be used to mitigate the impacts identified.

Specifically, the EIS will analyze the impacts associated with future development in this portion
of downtown. Future development may include additional development on the University of
Washington Tacoma campus, that is being planned to occur over approximately the next 20
years, as well as potential increases in employment and population that are being planned for in
this area. Preliminary growth targets for the area include 30,000 new jobs and 30,000 additional
people by 2030. To accommodate the projected growth, the City is in the process of completing
a transfer of development right feasibility study, consistent with RCW 43.21C.420(g). As noted
previously, the goal of this EIS is to eliminate the need for additional environmental analysis in
conjunction with development and redevelopment that occurs on individual sites within the
South Downtown Subarea. This environmental review is intended to serve as a catalyst for
redevelopment and an incentive for property owners and developers to favorably consider
Tacoma's South Downtown Subarea when locating a business or investing in the community.

**Location:** The geographic area that is the focus of South Downtown Subarea Plan is
shown on the attached map. Generally, the boundaries extend from S. 15th St. on the north to
Interstate 5 on the south and from Yakima Ave. on the west to “D” St. and “L” St. on the east.
This approximately 500-acre area encompasses the University of Washington Tacoma campus,
the Museum District, the Brewery District, Hillside, the southern portion of the Thea Foss
Waterway together with all Foss Waterway Development Authority properties, and the Tacoma

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5 The scoping meeting will be conducted pursuant to WAC 197-11-410(1)(b), not RCW 43.21C.420.
Dome District. The City of Tacoma intends to designate this South Downtown Subarea as a environmentally reviewed subarea under the provisions of RCW 43.21C.420, or RCW 43.21C.031 and RCW 43.21C.229 if provisions in RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b) expire.
Alternatives: It is proposed that the EIS analyze several alternatives as part of the South Downtown Subarea Plan. New development that is being planned within this study area may approximate a maximum of approximately 30 million square feet of floor area. Full build-out 6 on the campus of the University of Washington Tacoma (+/- 25%) is included in this maximum square footage amount, as is full build-out of Foss Waterway Development Authority properties.

It is anticipated that the alternatives will be based on variations of such factors as transportation, utilities, development phasing, and/or focus areas within the subarea that exhibit different mixes of land use and intensities of development. The alternatives may also include less intensive development within the study area with possible maximum build-outs of 10 million and 20 million square feet of floor area.

In addition to the development alternatives, this EIS will evaluate impacts associated with a No Action – or business as usual -- Alternative. For purposes of the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that development would occur within the South Downtown Subarea based on existing zoning and environmental review and that development associated with the University of Washington Tacoma would be generally consistent with 2008 Campus Master Plan Update (+/- 25%). Any such development or redevelopment that is proposed within the South Downtown Subarea in conjunction with the No Action Alternative would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis. Such projects would be subject to site-specific mitigation and potential SEPA-based appeals. And they would not be part of the non-project EIS process.

Lead Agency: The City of Tacoma and the University of Washington Tacoma are co-lead agencies for SEPA compliance; the City of Tacoma will serve as the nominal’ lead agency.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Required: The City of Tacoma and the University of Washington Tacoma have determined that the South Downtown Subarea Plan may have a significant adverse environmental impact on the environment. An EIS under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c) will be prepared. This decision was made after a review of information that is on-file with the City and UWT. Preliminary indications are that the following environmental parameters will be evaluated in this EIS:

- Earth;
- Air Quality (greenhouse gas emissions);
- Water;
- Plants and Animals;
- Environmental Health (contamination and hazardous materials);
- Noise;
- Land Use (adjacent land uses and consistency with plans, policies and regulations);
- Population and Housing;
- Historic and Cultural Resources;

6 maximum development allowed by zoning
7 A nominal lead agency is the public agency responsible for complying with the duties of lead agency (WAC 197-11-944) and complying with SEPA’s procedural requirements (WAC 197-11-758).
• Aesthetics;
• Transportation, Circulation and Parking;
• Public Utilities; and
• Public Services.

**EIS Scoping:** Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of this proposed EIS. You may comment on the alternatives, probable significant adverse impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. Methods for presenting your comments are described below. Please note that the City of Tacoma does not discriminate on the basis of disability in any of its programs, activities, or services. To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 253-591-5505. TTY or speech-to-speech users please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Services.

All comments are due no later than **5 PM, January 10, 2012**.

- **EIS Public Scoping Meeting** – An EIS Scoping meeting is scheduled for **4 pm to 7 pm Thursday, December 15, 2011** at Carwein Auditorium on the University of Washington Tacoma campus in the Keystone Building (1900 Commerce St.). The purpose of the meeting is to present information about the proposed project and to provide an opportunity to comment orally on the scope of the proposed EIS. Written comments will also be accepted at this meeting (comment forms will be available).

- **Submittal of Written Comments via Mail** – Written comments may be submitted to the City of Tacoma Responsible Official⁸ (noted below):

  Environmental Officer: .................. Mr. Ian Munce, J.D., AICP
  
  Title: ......................................... Urban Planner, Long-Range Planning Division
  
  Address: ..................................... City of Tacoma
  Community and Economic Development Dept.
  747 Market Street, Room 1036
  Tacoma, WA 98402
  
  Phone #: ..................................... 253.573.2478
  
  Fax #: ........................................ 253.591.2002
  
  Date: 11-30-2011  Signature: [Signature]

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⁸ The Responsible Official is the designated person within the City of Tacoma's Community and Economic Development Department that is responsible for compliance with the SEPA lead agency procedural responsibilities.
Concur: Ryan Petty, Director, Community & Economic Development, Responsible Official

Date: 11/30/11  Signature: Ryan Petty

- **Submittal of Written Comments via E-mail to the City's Website** – Comments may be submitted by e-mail to the City's Responsible Official (noted above):
  planning@cityoftacoma.org

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Pursuant to WAC 197-11-420, Ian Munce will work under the direction of Ryan Petty.