



# Notice of Availability and Planning Commission Public Hearing: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) & August 2013 Draft South Downtown Subarea Plan

## Co-Lead Agencies

City of Tacoma  
Community & Economic Development Department  
747 Market Street, Room 345  
Tacoma, WA 98402

University of Washington Tacoma  
1900 Commerce Street  
Tacoma, WA 98402

## Project Name: South Downtown Subarea Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

### Description of the Proposal

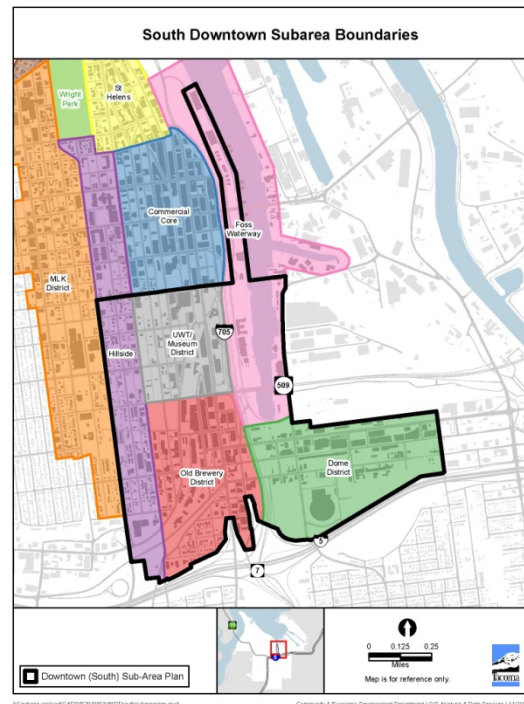
The proposed project involves development of an innovative, area-wide plan for Tacoma’s South Downtown that will become an element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The proposed Subarea Plan will supplement current Tacoma policies and regulations governing transportation, land use, affordable housing, open space, brownfields, capital facilities, and utilities.

Together with the Subarea Plan, a non-project EIS has been prepared that evaluates the environmental impacts associated with various alternatives that are part of the Subarea Plan and identifies measures that will be used to mitigate any potential adverse impacts identified. Specifically, the EIS analyzes the impacts associated with future development in this portion of downtown over approximately the next 20 years, along with potential increases in employment and population that are being planned for in this area.

The purpose of the South Downtown Subarea Plan is to anticipate, support, and guide the long-term redevelopment of the South Downtown area. The plan will serve as a statement of the City’s commitment to and direction for the area and as a resource for potential investors, property owners, the community, and other agencies.

### Location of the Proposal

The geographic area of the South Downtown Subarea Plan and EIS project encompasses an area of approximately 600 acres extending generally from South 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the north to Interstate 5 on the South and from South Yakima Avenue on the west to East ‘D’ Street and East ‘L’ Street on the east. Also included are properties located along the west edge of the Thea Foss Waterway between South 15<sup>th</sup> Street and South 4<sup>th</sup> Street. This area includes the University of Washington Tacoma campus, the Museum District, the Brewery District, Hillside District, Dome District, and the Foss Waterway, including only the west side of the waterway between South 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue.



## **Alternatives**

The Final EIS analyzes the impacts associated with future development in the South Downtown Subarea, including additional development that is forecasted 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 40,000 new jobs and 30,000 additional people by 2030.

Three development alternatives and one no action alternative were evaluated in the Final EIS and the preferred alternative is Alternative 1. This alternative could result in a net increase of up to 30,000,000 total gross square feet of net development within the South Downtown Subareas consisting of up to 15,000,000 square feet of residential development, 15,000,000 square feet of commercial development, 30,000 new residents and 40,000 new jobs.

## **Planned-Action Environmental Review**

As part of the subarea planning process, the City has prepared a non-project environmental impact statement 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 meet 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 implementing the State's Growth Management Act and the Regional Development Plan (Vision 2040).

The City has 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 wishes 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) appropriately addresses 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 appropriately addresses the subarea plan and development regulations.

This notice of availability is provided in accordance with the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) of 1971, Chapter 43.21C of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) as revised 1983, and SEPA Guidelines, Effective 16 January 1976 as revised 4 April 1984, Chapter 197-10, Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

## **Proposed Date of Implementation**

The South Downtown Subarea Plan's planning period extends 20 years or from 2014 to the year 2034. Implementation will commence beginning with the adoption of the South Downtown Subarea Plan by the Tacoma City Council, which is expected to occur in December 2013.

**Date of Issuance of this Final EIS**

August 28, 2013

**Planning Commission Public Hearing**

A Planning Commission public hearing is being held at **5:00 pm on Wednesday, September 18, 2013**, in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of the Tacoma Municipal Building (747 Market Street Street). The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for community members to comment on the Draft Subarea plan. There is no comment period for the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

**Availability of the Final EIS, Draft Subarea Plan, and Background Materials**

The complete South Downtown Subarea Plan and Appendices, Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Appendices can be downloaded from the project website at [www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning) by clicking on **“South Downtown Subarea Plan and EIS”**.

Copies of these documents are also available for review at:

- The Planning and Development Services Department  
747 Market Street, Room 345  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- All branches of the Tacoma Public Library.

The document may also be acquired on CD from the Planning and Development Services Department at no charge. Physical copies can be acquired for the cost of reproduction from any reproduction or copy business by download from the city website or from a CD copy.

**Draft Subarea Plan Comments**

You may submit written comments on the Draft Subarea Plan no later than **5:00 pm on September 20, 2013**. There is no comment period for the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Comments may be submitted to the Project Manager via mail, fax or e-mail, as follows:

**Project Manager:** ..... Ian Munce, Special Assistant to the Director

**Address:** ..... City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services Department  
747 Market Street, Room 345  
Tacoma, WA 98402

**Phone #:** ..... 253.573.2478

**Fax #:** ..... 253.591.5433

**E-mail Address:** ..... [imunce@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:imunce@cityoftacoma.org)

---

Ian Munce, SEPA Officer  
Special Assistant to the Director  
Planning and Development Services  
City of Tacoma  
747 Market Street, Room 345  
Tacoma, WA 98402