



Notice of Availability and Planning Commission Public Hearing: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and July 2014 Draft North Downtown Subarea Plan

Co-Lead Agencies

City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services Dept.
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402

Bates Technical College
1101 South Yakima Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98402

Project Name: North Downtown Subarea Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Description of the Proposal

The purpose of the North Downtown Subarea Plan is to anticipate, support, and guide the long-term redevelopment of the North Downtown area. The proposed project involves development of an innovative, area-wide plan for Tacoma’s North 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 to implement the North Downtown Subarea Plan and to conform to GMA requirements. 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.

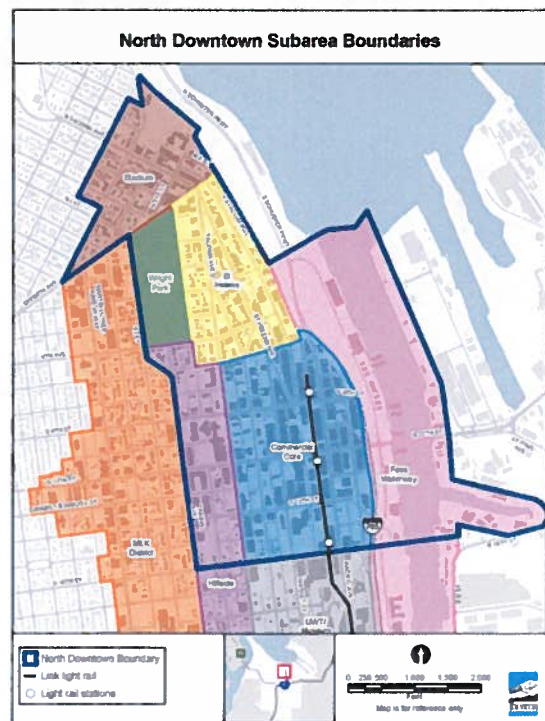
Together with the Subarea Plan, a non-project EIS is being prepared that will evaluate the environmental impacts associated with the alternative that is part of the Subarea Plan and identify measures that will be used to mitigate any potential adverse impacts identified. Specifically, the EIS will analyze 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.

Location of the Proposal

The geographic area of the North Downtown Subarea Plan and EIS project encompasses an area of approximately 520 acres. The subarea extends north from South 15th Street downtown to North 4th Street in the Stadium District and extends from Yakima Avenue in the west to the Thea Foss Waterway in the east. This area includes the Bates Technical College campus, the downtown commercial core, the Thea Foss Waterway, Stadium District, Hillside District, St. Helens District, and Wright Park.

Alternatives

The Final EIS analyzes the impacts associated with future development in the North 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 30,000 new jobs and 30,000 additional people by 2030. This new development could represent a maximum of approximately 30 million square feet of new residential, educational, and commercial space.

As required, the Final EIS also evaluates a “no action” alternative under which it is assumed that development would occur within the North Downtown Subarea based on existing plan policies, zoning and environmental review procedures.

Planned-Action Environmental Review

As part of the subarea planning process, the City has prepared a non-project environmental impact statement (EIS) for the North 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), and SEPA Guidelines, Effective 16 January 1976, Chapter 197-10, Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

Proposed Date of Implementation

The North 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 North Downtown Subarea Plan by the Tacoma City Council, which is expected to occur in September of 2014.

Date of Issuance of this Final EIS

July 2, 2014

Planning Commission Public Hearing

A Planning Commission public hearing is being held at 5:00 pm on **Wednesday, July 16, 2014**, in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of the Tacoma Municipal Building (747 Market 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 North Downtown Subarea Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) can be downloaded from the project website at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning by clicking on "North 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 **July 18, 2014**. 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

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