

Billboard Receiving Areas – Buffer Options Analysis

PURPOSE OF MAPS AND ANALYSIS

The table below identifies the approximate amount of new possible billboard receiving areas on arterial roads in the City of Tacoma and the number of existing billboard faces (total) that would comply in the allowable zones based upon the given buffers used. The mapped buffers are that distance a billboard is permitted from Residential, Shoreline, Historic and Conservation zoning districts and from the following sensitive uses: historic structures, churches, schools, and parks.

Preliminary Staff Analysis: Arterial Mileage Available for Siting Billboards and Number of Conforming Billboards (Conforming only as to Buffers), By Zone Category

	BUFFER OPTIONS	TOTAL	DOWNTOWN	MIXED USE	COMMERCIAL	INDUSTRIAL	NON-CONFORMING
Current Code	EXISTING 500' – Arterial Mileage Available	10.6	-	-	0.2	10.4	-
	EXISTING 500' – Billboard Count	37	-	-	2	35	274
300 ft. Buffer Scenario	300' – Arterial Mileage Available	26.7	2.2	5.8	1.2	17.5	-
	300' - Billboard Count	90	8	16	4	62	221
100 ft. Buffer Scenario	100' – Arterial Mileage Available	49.5	6.4	8.9	7.5	26.7	-
	100' - Billboard Count	185	18	20	70	77	126

OBSERVATIONS

The maps show at the 300-foot buffers, and more dramatically at the 100-foot buffers, extensive stretches of arterial road frontage opened up to new billboard locations in the City of Tacoma. Most notable are new high traffic areas in mixed use centers (outlined in yellow) of Tacoma Mall, Tacoma Central/Allenmore, James Center, Westgate, 72nd and Pacific, and 72nd and Portland. Most of these areas have few or no existing billboards.

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The depicted routes are not all inclusive of roadways where new billboards could possibly go. For example, while East 26th Street east of the Tacoma Dome is not classified as one of the arterials used on the map, much of the frontage on that road would permit billboards under the 300-foot buffer. There are many other non-arterial roads in the zones recommended for billboards where new structures could be located.

LIMITATIONS

The maps do not include buffering from mixed-use, commercial and downtown zones that the CWG are not recommending for billboards. The current billboard regulations for the City of Tacoma do not include buffers between billboards and commercial zones (T, C1) and downtown zones (including CWG “No Billboards Zone” DR (Downtown Residential)). The existing regulations, however, do require 500 ft. buffering from all mixed-use zones. The maps do not analyze impacts of the 300’ and 100’ buffer scenarios in the CWG recommended mixed use (NRX, URX, HMX), DR and View Sensitive Overlay District “No Billboards Zones.” The maps also do not show analysis of frontage along the interstate and primary state highway system routes running through the city: the state has additional billboard controls for those routes that preclude nearly all the frontage from being new billboard receiving areas.

Staff analysis shows that three faces, all located in M1 zoning, are the only faces that comply with all existing regulations for billboards in the City of Tacoma. These regulations include more than buffering (dispersion of billboards, height of billboard structure, size of face, number of faces). Of the 37 total billboards that comply with the existing buffering, 34 do not comply for non-buffer reasons. However, some of the billboard characteristic regulations are also recommended for lesser standards, which will allow some of those 34 to potentially comply with the recommendations of the CWG. These maps do not analyze how design code factors other than buffers will impact status of existing billboards.

ON-LINE MAPS

The Available Arterial maps should be ready for viewing at close of business on January 29, 2015. On-line viewing will allow magnification and better resolution.