



City of Tacoma
Planning Commission

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PRESENTATIONS and HANDOUTS

Regular Meeting on October 19, 2016

- 1. Urban Design Studio**
(PowerPoint Slides, for Discussion Item D-2)



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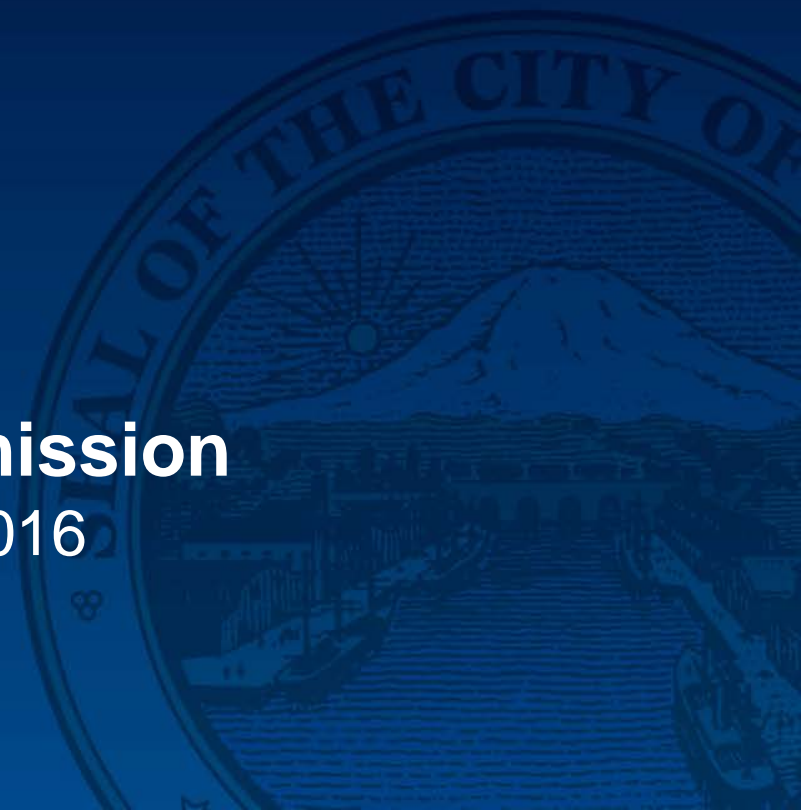
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Urban Design Studio

Planning and Development Services

Planning Commission

October 19, 2016

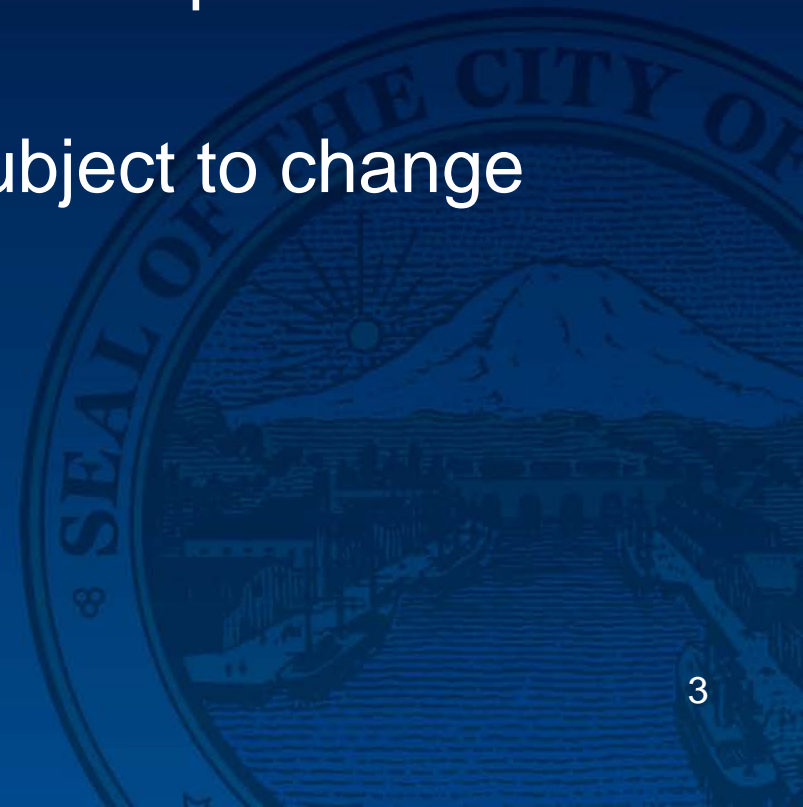


What is a Design Studio?

- Goal: Stronger spatial, visual, cultural identity for Tacoma and neighborhoods
- Housed in Planning Services
- Deliver design services within PDS and to internal and external partners
- Perform education and outreach
- Develop and administer Design Review

Budget Request

- 1 FTE for Urban Design Planner
- 0.4 FTE for UWT Intern
- Consultant Services for development of a design review proposal
- Budget is not final, still subject to change



Why Design Review?

- Policy emphasis in One Tacoma Plan
- High Priority action recommended by the PC
- Relief from and flexibility within the code
- Community interest
- Public engagement opportunities
- Equity
- Communicate City vision, not just minimum requirements

Integrating Design Provisions

- Codify vs. Freestanding?

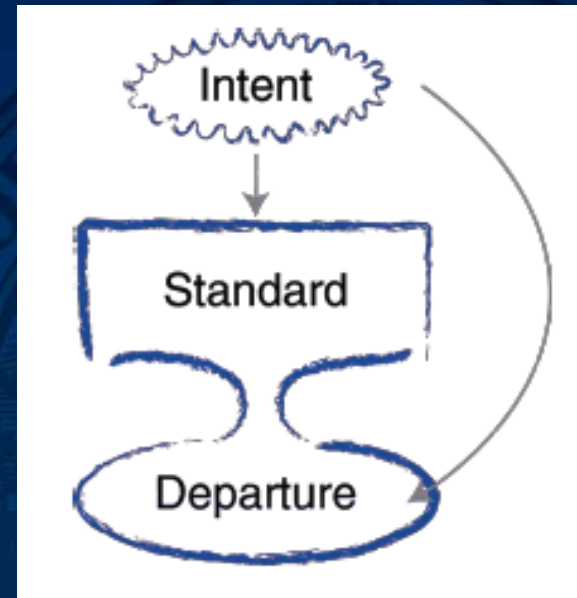
The screenshot shows the Ellensburg City Code website. The header includes the 'code' logo, the title 'Ellensburg City Code', and navigation options like 'Help', 'Text Size: A +A', and 'EMPRE'. The main content area is titled 'Title 15 LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE Chapter 15.530 BUILDING DESIGN'. A search bar and 'Advanced Search' link are present. On the left, a sidebar lists various city code titles, with 'Title 15 LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE' selected. The main text area contains two sections: 'Figure 15.530.050(C). Acceptable and unacceptable metal siding examples.' and 'D. Concrete Block Standards. Concrete block may be used if it is incorporated with other permitted materials and it complies with the following:'. The first section includes two images: one showing a building facade with acceptable metal siding and another showing a building facade with unacceptable metal siding (circled in red). The second section includes two numbered points: '1. When used for the primary facade, buildings must incorporate a combination of textures and/or colors to add visual interest...' and '2. Concrete block may comprise no more than 50 percent of a facade facing a public right-of-way or open space...'. Below the second point is an image showing a building facade with a mix of split-face and smooth concrete blocks, with a red diagonal line drawn across it to indicate it is unacceptable.

The cover of the 'Boise Citywide Design Standards and Guidelines' document. The title is prominently displayed in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below the title, it says 'Adopted April 2013'. The cover features a collage of images related to urban design, including buildings, streets, and pedestrian environments. The collage is organized into sections: 'BOISE IDENTITY', 'ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER', 'DESIGN QUALITY', and 'PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT'. The Boise City logo, featuring the Idaho State Capitol building, is positioned in the bottom left corner.

Integrating Design Provisions

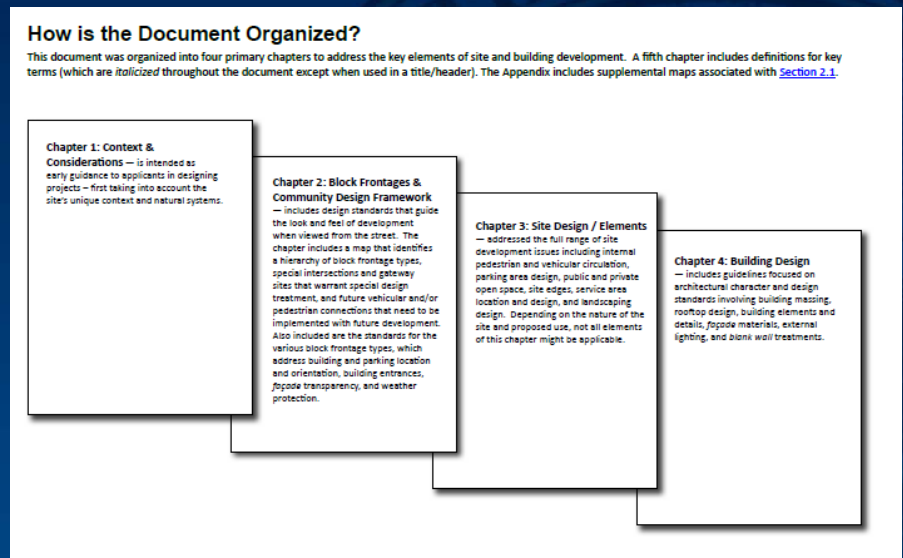
Specificity vs. Flexibility

- Intent statements
- Standards (shall, must, is required)
- Guidelines
 1. Can act as requirement – alternative treatments allowed
 2. Or voluntary
- Departure (2 options)
 1. Allow for all standards/guidelines
 2. Only for specific standards



Organizing Design Provisions

1. Introduction/administration
2. Site layout/block frontages
3. Site design elements
 - Circulation
 - Open space
 - Service elements
 - Landscaping
4. Building design
 - Character
 - Massing
 - Details
 - Materials/color



Updating Design Provisions

1. Where are the gaps?

- Areas/zones/types of development?
- Site & building design issues?
- Tacoma: Institutional/public uses, industrial, mixed-use projects outside of centers

2. Updating specificity/flexibility approach

- Tacoma: Importance of updating intent statements

3. Approach to use of graphics

- Tacoma: Use of graphics and formatting is limited in code

Figure 21.62.040V
Acceptable and Unacceptable Metal Siding Use



Building 1 uses metal siding as an accent element with masonry as the dominant material. Metal is used for the corners and upper floor. Building 2 integrates a variety of colored metal siding on upper floors to complement the windows and balconies. Building 3 uses a consistent gray colored metal siding on the middle floors, but with recessed windows and balconies. Building 4, on the other hand, uses an excessive amount of the same type and color of metal siding and would not meet the standards.

Updating Design Provisions

1. Where are the gaps?
2. Updating specificity/flexibility approach
3. Approach to use of graphics
4. Updating standards/guidelines to meet design objectives.....and balance specificity & flexibility

What we've heard so far

- Time is right for design review
- Clear intent statements
- Critical design issues
- Contextual issues related to sites
- Options
- Balance of prescription/flexibility
- Workable/predictable process

Who Reviews Projects?

- Administrative review
- Citywide Design Review Board (DRB)
- Multiple area specific DRB's



Applicability

Which projects are subject to design review? Considerations:

- Available staffing resources
- Staff & DRB resource & expertise to provide timely & helpful review
- Program/process efficiency

Applicability - Options

- All commercial & multifamily development
- Departures
- Bonuses
- Specific areas/zones



What's the Level of Public Engagement?

- Notification techniques
- Written comment
- Public meetings
 - Agendas
 - Rules
 - Dialogue
 - Meeting management (staying on topic)

Costs & Fees?

- Program development:
 - Proposed budget is intended to deliver a working program.
 - Costs could climb depending on how expansive the proposal is.
 - Budget request reflects an incremental approach
- Application \$ approaches:
 - Development cost recovery policy?
 - Fixed vs. Hours spent

Summary

- Sets clear expectations on design to applicants & community members
- Provides the good balance of predictability & flexibility
- Facilitates better public involvement in development process
- Facilitates better communication between reviewer and applicant

Also.....very important

- DRB training & communication
- Staff – meeting management

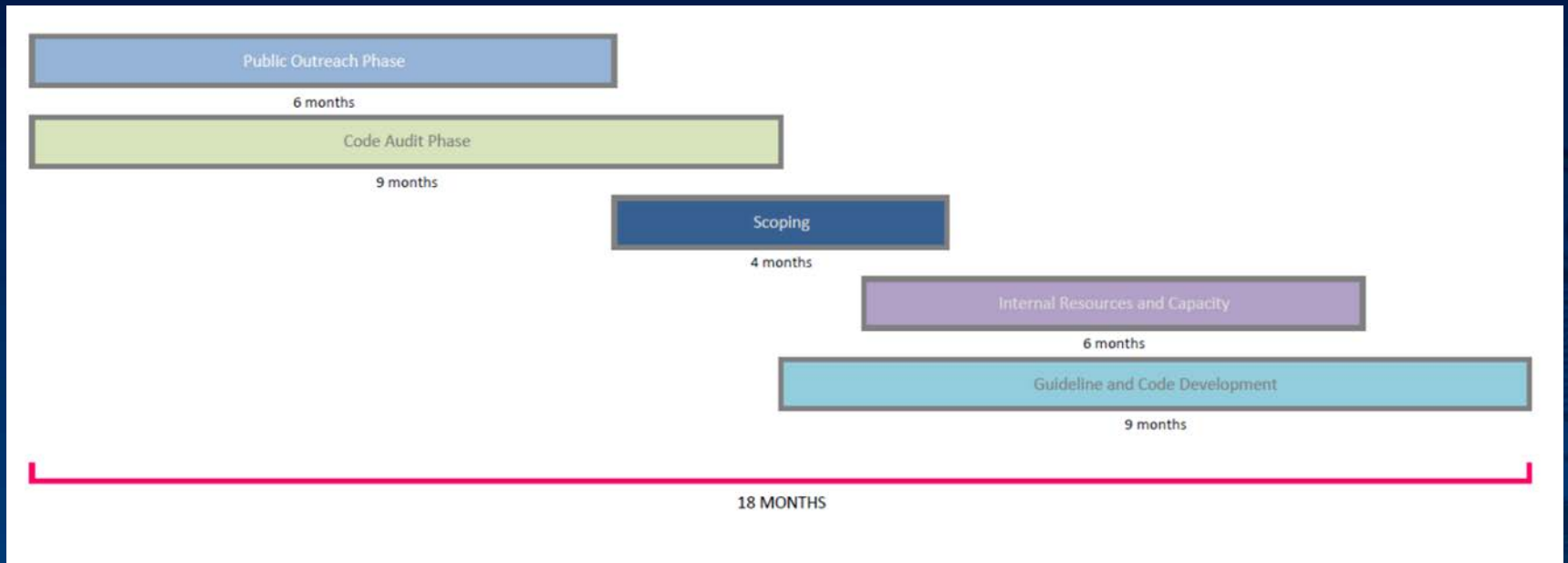


Thoughts on Starting...

- Expand Administrative Design Review
- Consider developing a Design Review Board:
 - Certain geographic areas (MUCs)
 - Types of projects (public projects)
- Create a single city-wide design manual, rather than multiple for different areas
- Strengthen and expand staff expertise

Next Steps

- Pending budget and contract



Questions?

