



# Urban Design Project Review

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Planning Commission

Urban Design Project Review Package - Recommendation

October 18, 2023

Urban Design Studio  
City of Tacoma | Long Range Planning

# Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Engagement Overview*
- ◇ *Commission-directed Revisions*
  - *Design Departures*
  - *Urban Design Board*
  - *Amenity Space*
- ◇ *Urban Design Project Review Manual Updates*
- ◇ *Staff Request*
- ◇ *Schedule*

# Project Overview

## Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
  - *Elements*
  - *Thresholds*
  - *Applicable Areas*
- ◇ *Engagement Overview*
- ◇ *Updated Revisions*
- ◇ *Urban Design Project Review Manual*
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- Establish an ***Urban Design Project Review*** process
  - Administrative and Urban Design Board review paths
  - Develop ***Manual*** for design review
- Create an ***Urban Design Board***
- Improve ***Design Standards*** in Land Use Code (TMC)

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## What types of Projects will require Permits?

Location	Exempt from UDPR	UDPR Required	
	TMC standards only	Administrative Review	Board Review
Neighborhood Center	0-10,000 sq. ft. 	10,000 – 40,000 sq. ft. 	40,000 + sq. ft. 
Downtown Tacoma Mall Crossroads Center	0-20,000 sq. ft. 	20,000 – 100,000 sq. ft. 	100,000 + sq. ft. 

# Project Overview

## Agenda

### ◇ Project Overview

- Elements
- Thresholds
- Applicable Areas

### ◇ Engagement Overview

### ◇ Updated Revisions

### ◇ Urban Design Project Review Manual

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### ◇ Schedule

## Where UDPR would be required

Limited to 16 mapped Mixed-Use Centers

- Downtown RGC
- Tacoma Mall RGC
- Crossroads Centers (8)
- Neighborhood Centers (6)

***Does NOT apply to Home in Tacoma geographies***



# Engagement Overview

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<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	<b># of Contacts</b>
<b>Online Community Open House &amp; Priorities Survey</b>	314
<b>Planning Commission Briefings</b>	24
<b>Project Advisory Group (PAG) Meetings</b>	19
<b>Council Committee Briefings (IPS and NHC)</b>	7
<b>Neighborhood Council and Community meetings</b>	5
<b>Permit Advisory Group</b>	4
<b>Technical Workshops (Sustainable Tacoma Commission, Planning Commission)</b>	3
<b>Neighborhood Planning Program (Steering groups &amp; community fair)</b>	3

# Revisions: Design Departures

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## **Current Draft**

### Standards eligible for departure review

- Parking development standards (TMC 13.06.090.C, 13.06.090.D, 13.06.090.E)
- Building design standards (TMC 13.06.100)

## **Revisions**

### Standards eligible for departure review

- **Mixed-Use Center districts:**
- **Prohibition of ground-floor residential uses along designated Pedestrian Streets**
  - **Minimum setbacks**
  - **Height**
  - **Maximum floor area**
  - **Maximum setbacks**
  - **Amenity space requirements**
- **Downtown districts**
  - **Height**
  - **Maximum setbacks**
- Site development standards
  - **Drive-throughs**
  - **Landscaping standards**
  - Parking lot development standards
  - **Pedestrian and bicycle support standards**
  - **Short and long term bicycle parking**
  - **Transit support facilities**
  - **Sign standards**
  - **Residential transition standards**
  - **Fences and retaining walls**
  - **Utilities**
  - **Street level building transitions**
- Design standards

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## **Current Draft**

### Approval criteria

Demonstrate the proposed alternative design provides equal or superior results to the requirement from which relief is sought in terms of quantity, quality, location, and function.

## **Revisions**

### Approval criteria

Approval will be granted if one of two conditions are met:

- Provides equal or superior results to the requirement from which relief is sought in terms of quantity, quality, location, and function.
- *Allows the design to better address the general criteria for Urban Design Project Review approval.*

*Aspects of the development that may be considered in support of a proposed design departure include:*

- *Mitigation of impacts to and/or preservation of natural and built features including, but not limited to, trees, other vegetation, natural grade, historic or cultural artifacts, and public views of landmarks*
- *Optimization or innovative use of low impact design/green stormwater infrastructure, energy efficient design, or other green building best practices, methods and/or technologies.*
- *Supports relevant adopted City goals and/or policies.*



# Revisions: Urban Design Board

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## **Current Draft**

Seven members

No. of Members	Board Representation
4	Design or development professional
1	Active transportation
1	Sustainable development
1	Culture and heritage

- Min. 2 from Council Districts 3, 4 or 5
- Max. 2 may reside outside of City limits

## **Revisions**

- Exception to the residency requirement may be allowed to fill up to two (2) Board positions. ***When multiple candidates are under consideration for appointment and some but not all candidates are Tacoma residents, preference shall be granted to Tacoma residents.***

# Revisions: Amenity Space

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## Amenity Space Requirements

### Current Draft

#### Required amenity space

- 50 sq. ft. per unit (no change)
- Common interior amenities now eligible (*aligns with non-X District Multifamily standards*)

### Revision

Given complexity of topic, no changes are proposed at this time.

Further study could consider:

- Most appropriate means of calculating minimum amenity space requirements – number of units, building area, site area, etc.
- Maximum total area required / cap
- Development size-based tiers

# Revisions: Amenity Space Reductions

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## Amenity Space Reductions

### Current Draft

Full Reduction	50% Reduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applicability: Only most intense zones</li><li>• Required: 1/8 mile park proximity, and</li><li>• Choice: Min. FAR <b>OR</b> mixed-use development</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applicability: All X zones</li><li>• Required: 1/4 mile park proximity, and</li><li>• Choice: Min. FAR <b>OR</b> mixed-use development</li></ul>

### Revisions

- | 50% Reduction  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applicability: All X zones</li><li>• Required: <b>1/8 mile</b> park <i>or</i> “<b>school park</b>” proximity, and</li><li>• Choice: Min. FAR <b>OR</b> mixed-use development</li></ul> |
- *Qualifying school parks are defined as a public school facility that contains well maintained recreational facilities, which are regularly available to the public year-round, and subject to an interlocal agreement between Tacoma Public Schools and Metro Parks Tacoma establishing minimum levels of access, maintenance, and facility amenities.*

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## Appendix Update: Aerial Images Added per Commission Direction

### LOWER PACIFIC

The Lower Pacific Crossroads Center is a retail and service center serving the surrounding residential areas and a wider trade area. The center features a balanced mix of commercial, residential, and institutional uses, including a grocery store, hospital, medical offices, medical related county offices, and auto-oriented retail. There are almost 200 housing units, 70% of which are single family. Pacific Avenue provides quick access downtown and a sufficiently high traffic volume to support regional retail business. This district is situated on a plateau with views of Downtown and the Port of Tacoma Manufacturing and Industrial Center on the northern portion. Topography makes cycling difficult and there are no facilities servicing the district, although one east-west route is proposed along E 37th Street. Bus routes # 1, # 53, and # 54 serve this District with connections for Downtown and Tacoma Mall, linking 6th Avenue, Lincoln, Upper Pacific, James Center, and Lower Portland Mixed-use Centers (MUC).

Sidewalks and pedestrian facilities are present but numerous parking lots line the street front and do not promote walkability along Pacific Avenue. Future plans include High Capacity Transit service. Transit investments should be accompanied by streetscape improvements to better serve pedestrians and cyclists



Figure 24: Lower Pacific Aerial Plan View

### POINT RUSTON

Point Ruston is a unique mixed-use waterfront destination that will provide both neighborhood services and draw from a city-wide customer base. The Center is positioned on the former Asarco property, between the Ruston Way waterfront recreation area and Point Defiance—an area that draws several million visitors a year. The Point Ruston development, still under construction, is the only center based on a single development site. The center will be anchored by a theater, grocery and hotel as well as providing other shopping and amenities the estimated 800–1,000 households expected to be accommodated on site. The Dome to Defiance Signature Trail provide a significant recreational amenity, linking the development to other park and cultural destinations within an easy walk or bike ride.



Figure 25: Point Ruston Aerial Plan View

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## Appendix Update: Additional Precedent Imagery and Illustrations

Additional Precedent Imagery and Illustrations

C APPENDICES: ADDITIONAL PRECEDENT IMAGERY AND ILLUSTRATIONS G-1

### SITE PLANNING

G-1: The arrangement of buildings, infrastructure and open spaces support Urban Design goals and objectives and be contextually appropriate.

01 Orient buildings toward streets, internal connections, pedestrian network (including trails), and open space.



Example comment one

02 Provide minimal setbacks, prominent entrances, and active ground floor uses for buildings abutting pedestrian streets and other streets with enhanced or notable active mobility.



Example comment one

03 Provide more generous setbacks, emphasized public-private transitions, and private or less active ground floor uses for buildings abutting residential streets or where buffering is warranted.



Example comment one



Example comment one



Example comment one

126 URBAN DESIGN PROJECT REVIEW MANUAL

CITY OF TACOMA, WA 127

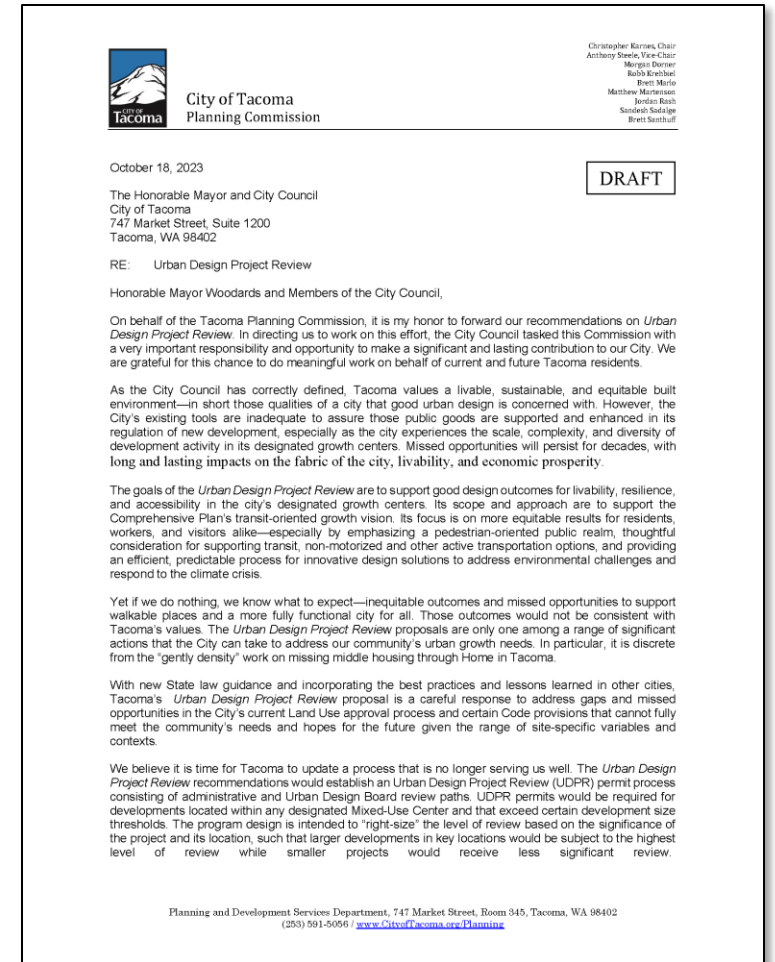
- Refined layout with clarified graphic presence and consistency
- G-1 example layout
- G-1 to be finalized
- Imagery for all guidelines will be added before City Council consideration

# Staff Request

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- Review and Approve Draft Letter of Recommendation
- Review & Approve Draft Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report



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## City Council

- ❑ January 24, 2024
  - *Begin City Council review process at IPS Committee*
  - *Briefing on Planning Commission recommendation*
  
- ❑ February 28, 2024
  - *IPS consideration (continued if necessary)*
  - *Possible “Do Pass”*
  
- ❑ Spring/Summer 2024 City Council review and action