



**TO:** Members of the Tacoma Community Council

**FROM:** Brian Boudet, CEDD  
Reuben McKnight, CEDD

**SUBJECT:** Design Review Project briefing

**DATE:** July 26, 2007

---

### Introduction

On October 25, 2005 the City Council passed Substitute Resolution 36685 (attached), expressing the Council's support for the potential development of a citywide design review process, and directing the City Manager to present the budget and staffing requirements to the Council for the 2006-2007 budget cycle.

The Community and Economic Development Department has contracted MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design to assist City staff with this project.

The purpose of this briefing is to:

- Introduce this project to the Community Council
- Present an overview of the scope and schedule for the project
- Provide a status report on the progress thus far
- Solicit feedback and direction from Council members

### Overview of Project

The objective of the Design Review Project is to develop a model design review program, including goals, design standards, guidelines, design review process, implementation strategies and administrative requirements for its integration into the regulatory process.

The guiding principles for this project are to develop design review procedures that:

- Improve upon the City's existing design review programs
- Support quality, sustainable, compatible development
- Support growth and development
- Are administratively practical
- Are user-friendly and understandable
- Are flexible and promote innovation
- Are predictable
- Encourage public involvement
- Are integrated with other existing City processes

**Scope and Schedule**

The preliminary scope as directed by Council includes design review for industrial, commercial, mixed-use, multi-family and single-family plat development throughout the City and could include some additional analysis relative to accessory dwelling units and single-family in-fill development.

Total project timeline: Approximately 18-24 months

Draft schedule/deadlines

ACTIVITY	TENTATIVE DATE
Planning Commission – Project Introduction/Overview	October 3, 2006
Approval of draft amendments to Comprehensive Plan and Regulatory Code for Public Distribution	July 2008
Complete SEPA review	July 2008
Planning Commission – Public Hearing	August 2008
Planning Commission – Final Recommendation	September 2008
City Council – Study Session and Public Hearing	October 2008
City Council – Adoption of amendments to Comprehensive Plan and Regulatory Code	November 2008

Key Tasks/Milestones

TENTATIVE DATE	TASK
Completed	Develop scope of work and budget
Currently underway	<p>Develop an outline of an Urban Design Program document for review and approval, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An audit of Tacoma’s existing design review policies, processes and outcomes</li> <li>b. A review of policies in comparable local jurisdictions</li> <li>c. Meetings with a City task force (including key staff members from applicable departments) to identify/discuss key issues related to the project and process.</li> <li>d. Begin public participation meetings with stakeholders and interested citizens</li> </ul>

<p>Aug/Sep 2007</p>	<p>Begin to develop alternative design review options based upon data collected and stakeholder/community input, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An analysis of advantages/disadvantages for alternative approaches (level of service, economic, opportunities for public input)</li> <li>b. Community forum, stakeholder review and Planning Commission review of alternative design review options</li> <li>c. Development of a design element vision to prepare modifications to Comprehensive Plan, addressing the previous items as well as the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the appropriate administration system for the City of Tacoma and the appropriate scope for the standards (city-wide, area specific, development specific, etc.)</li> <li>• What is the appropriate level of control?</li> <li>• What is desired by the general public?</li> <li>• What is desired by the City of Tacoma?</li> <li>• What is desired by the development community?</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p>May 2008</p>	<p>Create preferred alternative draft design guideline, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Select preferred design review option and identify zoning and administrative regulatory changes</li> <li>b. Conduct community outreach on proposed design review process, standards and guidelines</li> <li>c. Present draft design revisions to Comprehensive Plan to Planning Commission and stakeholders</li> <li>d. Planning Commission review of draft design revisions as a part of the annual amendments to the Comprehensive Plan</li> </ol>
<p>November 2008</p>	<p>Develop procedures for design review process and implementing code amendments, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prepare design element amendments and regulatory changes for residential, commercial, industrial uses and subdivisions.</li> <li>b. Conduct environmental review of proposed design element amendment to Comprehensive Plan and regulations</li> <li>c. Develop illustrative graphic designs to support the guidelines</li> <li>d. Facilitate Public review and Planning Commission public hearing on draft design element amendment, the program document and expiration of public comment period</li> <li>e. Facilitate City Council review and adoption of design element</li> <li>f. Planning Commission review of draft design review process, standards and guidelines revisions</li> <li>g. Planning Commission public hearing on draft code amendments for design review standards, guidelines and process and expiration of public comment period</li> <li>h. City Council review and adoption of design process, standards and guidelines</li> </ol>





## SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION NO. 36685

1           WHEREAS many local governments in Washington State utilize design  
2 standards and design review as a mechanism to ensure that public and private  
3 development projects are aesthetically compatible with nearby development, and  
4

5           WHEREAS local citizen groups have voiced their desire for a community  
6 discussion on the potential development of a design review process, and  
7

8           WHEREAS concerns about the appearance of new developments has  
9 created a climate where an open community dialogue regarding the legality, need,  
10 and potential processes of increased development review for design attributes is  
11 warranted, and

12           WHEREAS a community dialogue has been initiated by the Tacoma City  
13 Council, which will include input from the Tacoma Planning Commission and  
14 various community and professional organizations as well as citizens; Now  
15 Therefore,

16           BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:  
17

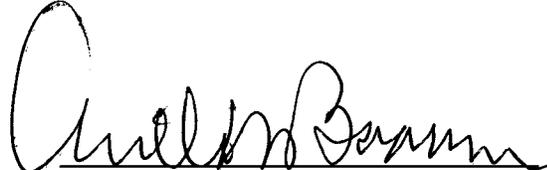
18           That the City Council hereby supports the potential development of a  
19 citywide design review process for commercial, industrial, multi-family, and  
20 multi-plat single family construction.  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26



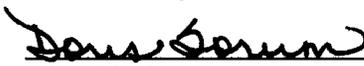
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is hereby directed to develop and present the staffing and financial requirements for the development and implementation of a design review process, and that he do so during budget discussions with the City Council in November and December 2005.

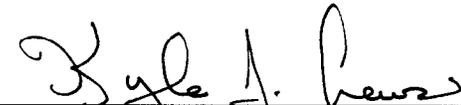
Adopted OCT 25 2005

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant City Attorney