Design Review Program
Permit Advisory Group
June 15, 2022

Urban Design Studio
City of Tacoma | Long Range Planning
Agenda

• Design Review Program Scope and Recap
• Overview of Design Review Processes
• Key Urban Design Priorities
• Next Steps
Program Geographic Scope

- Downtown Regional Growth
- Tacoma Mall Regional Growth
- Crossroads Center
- Neighborhood Center
Program Goal and Elements

Goal

*Improve overall development design quality consistent with Comprehensive Plan goals and policies*

Program Elements

- Improve *Design Standards*
- Develop *Design Guidelines*
- Establish a *Design Review* process
  - Create, Train and staff a *Design Review Board*
Program Development Progress

2018-19  Urban Design Studio initiative launched; Project Advisory Group (PAG) established; consultant VIA hired

2019-20  Council IPS Briefing; Frequent Meetings of Planning Commission & PAG

2021     Draft documents produced; Staff departed, work paused

2022     New staff convene expanded Project Advisory Group; draft document refinement; Council, Commission and community engagement
Guiding Principles for Design Review Program

**Improved Design Outcomes**

- Builds upon existing design review tools
- Adds flexibility and promotes innovation

**Community Responsiveness**

- Results in context sensitive development reflective of community vision and values
- Provides opportunities for productive public involvement
- Focused on planned growth centers

**Efficient**

- Integrated with other City processes
- Administratively practical
- Processes and requirements are understandable and predictable
## Overview of Design Controls

### Existing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Standards</th>
<th>Development Standards</th>
<th>Design Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT can be built?</td>
<td>HOW MUCH can be built?</td>
<td>HOW is it built?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Prescriptive &amp; measurable</em></td>
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### In Development

**Design Guidelines**

- HOW does it meet urban design objectives?
- *Flexible & qualitative*
Overview of Design Controls

**Existing**

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- **Land uses**
  - Residential
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Mixed-Use

- **Housing types**
  - Single-dwelling
  - Duplex
  - Townhouse
  - Apartments

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<tr>
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<td>HOUSING TYPES</td>
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<td>Site planning:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parking location</td>
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<td>HOW MUCH must be built?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Building design:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ground-floor features: windows, storefronts,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>weather protection</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mass reduction: upper story stepbacks, façade</td>
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<tr>
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<td>widths</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Street orientation</td>
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**In Development**

**Design Guidelines**

- Site Planning
- Connectivity
- Architectural Composition
- Public Realm
- Climate Responsiveness
- Character, Culture & Heritage
- Open Space
# Overview of Design Controls

## Outside Design Review Scope

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<tr>
<td>WHAT can be built?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Land uses</td>
<td>• Min. Lot Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Residential</td>
<td>• Setbacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commercial</td>
<td>• Building height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Industrial</td>
<td>• FAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mixed-Use</td>
<td>• Min/Max Density</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing types</td>
<td>• Yard space (min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Single-dwelling</td>
<td>• Landscape buffer (min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Duplex</td>
<td>• Parking (min)</td>
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<td>• Townhouse</td>
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## Within Design Review Scope

<table>
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<td>HOW is it built?</td>
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<td><em>Prescriptive &amp; measurable</em></td>
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### Site planning:
- Parking location
- Connectivity

### Building design:
- Ground-floor features: windows, storefronts, weather protection
- Mass reduction: upper story stepbacks, façade widths
- Street orientation

### HOW Much must be built?
- Yard space (min)
- Landscape buffer (min)
- Parking (min)
Design Review Processes

**Required Design Review**

Certain projects based on location, use and size

Administrative Review and Design Review Board tracks

*Refinement is underway to avoid Home In Tacoma overlap at launch & to assure program efficiency goals*

**Departure Design Review**

Opportunity for developers to depart from prescriptive design standards and propose alternative approaches to meet design objectives

*Would replace Design Variances*
Program Geographic Scope

Downtown Regional Growth
Tacoma Mall Regional Growth
Crossroads Center
Neighborhood Center

Home In Tacoma areas excluded from Required Design Review geographic scope
Design Review Processes

**Step 1**
Geography Threshold Review

- Is the Development within Design Review Geography?

  - YES
  - NO

**Step 2**
Development Thresholds Review

- Does the development meet or exceed min. DR Development Thresholds?

  - YES
  - NO

**Step 3**
Design Standards Review

- Exempt from Required DR but Departure Review may be sought
  - YES
  - NO

  - Does development conform to TMC Design Standards?
    - YES
    - NO

**Step 4**
Design Review Process Determination

- Required Review

  - YES
  - NO

- Departure Review

**Potential Min. DR Threshold Metrics**
- Building Size
- Site Area
- MFTE Participation
- Development Bonuses Sought

**Potential DRB Threshold Metrics**
- Building Size
- Site Area
- MFTE Participation
- Development Bonuses Sought

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Geographies
- Downtown
- Tacoma Mall
- Mixed-Use Centers

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Design Review Program – TPAG | June 15, 2022
Framing Urban Design Priorities

- Site Planning
- Connectivity
- Architectural Composition
- Public Realm
- Climate Responsive
- Character, Culture & Heritage
- Open Space
Next Steps — Community Engagement Strategy

Provide updates and solicit feedback

Recent contacts

✓ North End Neighborhood Council
✓ Permit Advisory Group (April 20 & June 15)
✓ Cross District Association of Tacoma (May 18)

Spring & Summer 2022

❑ Sustainable Tacoma (June 16)

To be scheduled:
❑ Neighborhood Councils
❑ Community Council of Tacoma
❑ Neighborhood Business Districts
❑ Others as identified – Suggestions Welcome!

General Public: Exploring opportunities for online and in-person engagement (i.e. visual-preference survey, neighborhood “walkabout”)
Next Steps — Planning Commission + City Council

Anticipated milestones

Spring
- Individual Commissioner briefings (as requested)
- Update Briefing(s) of PAG progress
- IPS Briefing 6/08

Summer
- Project materials refinement
- Continued work with PAG & PC
- Public engagement

Late 2022
- Present program proposal package to PC
- Release proposal package for Public Review
- PC public hearing
- Finalize PC recommendation to City Council
- Council public hearing, deliberation and possible action

Image Credit: PLACE Design Studio – James Center North
Next Steps – Permit Advisory Group

Future Input Opportunities

Key Items of Interest
• Required Design Review Threshold Metrics
• Administrative vs DRB Review Threshold Metrics
• Others?

Timing
• Review of Draft Proposal Package at Planning Commission
Questions?