



Spotlight on South Tacoma

March 2024

WHAT'S HAPPENING; WHAT'S COMING IN SOUTH TACOMA – OPEN HOUSE

Event Summary

Event Description

On March 21, 2024, the City of Tacoma and partner organizations held an open house at the STAR Center to share more about upcoming initiatives in response to community feedback, programs the City is working on to address community concerns, and how to get involved. Sandwiches were provided from Pho V&V's and churros from Pasteles Fino's del Angel, as well as a kids' craft table and Treetops childcare. There were also several language ambassadors present to work with local community members who speak languages other than English.



About Spotlight on South Tacoma

What's Happening; What's Coming in South Tacoma was the third and final event of the [Spotlight on South Tacoma](#) event series. The City of Tacoma's Planning and Development Services Department organized the Spotlight on South Tacoma series to better understand the community's questions, concerns, and vision for the future, and to identify ways that community members can participate in the range of ongoing City of Tacoma and partner projects.

Participation and Partners

There were about 70 attendees in total, and they took the opportunity to speak with representatives from 14 different South Tacoma-focused or citywide programs and projects:

- Council Members Bushnell and Scott – City of Tacoma
- Metro Parks
- Tacoma Tree Foundation
- City of Tacoma, Tacoma Water, and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District Code Update)
- Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (Health Impact Assessment)
- Sound Transit (South Tacoma Station Area Access Improvements)
- St. Vincent De Paul, Centro Rendu
- City of Tacoma:
 - Environmental Services (Urban Waters Protection Plan)
 - Public Works (Transportation Master Plan, Safe Routes to School, Vision Zero, Tacoma Streets Initiative)

- Office of Strategy (Community Safety Strategy)
- Planning and Development Services
 - Comprehensive Plan
 - South Tacoma Historic Property Survey
 - South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan
 - Permitting Services

Language Access

A handout detailing summaries of key projects in South Tacoma was available at the event and [online](#) in Russian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and Khmer with community language ambassadors present for in-person interpretation in Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.

Next Steps

The intent of the meeting was to provide information to the community about upcoming and ongoing projects in South Tacoma, opportunities for the community to get involved, and give space for the community to provide feedback directly to the City and partners. The individual projects and partners noted above will continue to coordinate internally to ensure that we share community feedback from South Tacoma and collaborate on future opportunities for community involvement. Community feedback provided at the event will also be used to inform future engagement, ongoing projects, and go toward visioning processes for new projects like the South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan.



South Tacoma Neighborhood Planning

OPEN HOUSE TABLING

What's Happening, What's Coming in South Tacoma

At the What's Happening, What's Coming in South Tacoma Open House, many of the roughly 70 attendees took the opportunity to provide input for the South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan by putting down sticky notes on display boards (see photos) and filling out individual surveys about South Tacoma's assets, challenges, and opportunities in addition to asking the Neighborhood Planning Team key questions about the planning process.

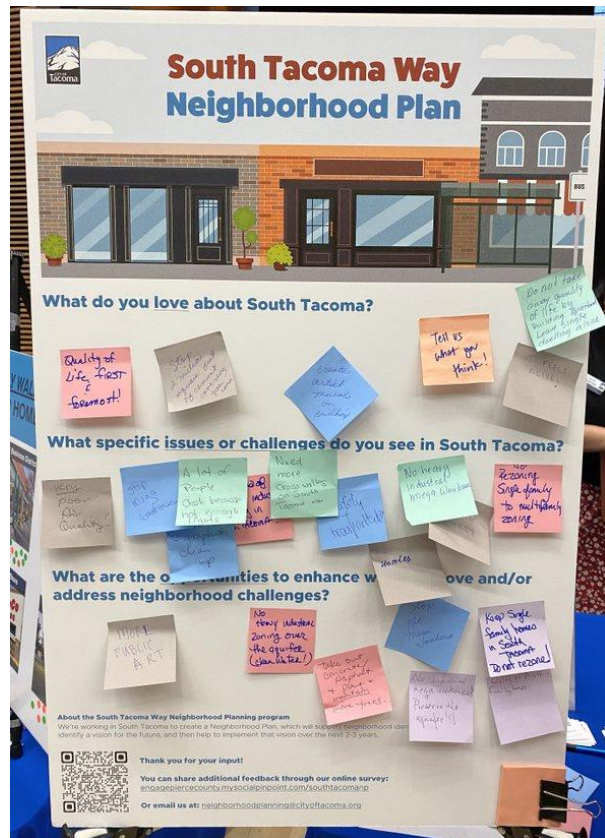
About the Neighborhood Planning Program

The City of Tacoma's pilot Neighborhood Planning Program enhances planning and development support to help communities create strong, vibrant, and diverse neighborhoods. In South Tacoma, the Neighborhood Planning Program will soon be focusing in on priority areas for the emerging South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan derived through community engagement (see what we have heard so far below).

The program begins with a robust community engagement phase, and then moves into implementation of key neighborhood strategies. This open house was part of the first phase of outreach efforts intended to collect feedback on Plan priorities and project ideas. The South Tacoma Neighborhood Plan Steering Group will guide the creation of draft priorities based on this feedback, which we will bring back to the community for additional feedback.

What We Heard

At the open house, we asked participants to share their ideas on the key topics we had heard so far (see below) as well as what they saw as assets, challenges, and opportunities for South Tacoma. Additionally, attendees could fill out surveys in English, Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Korean, and Khmer. We received 2 English and 5 Spanish surveys.



Key topic	What we heard
ASSETS	STAR Center; vibrancy and quality of life; community art/murals; diversity of home type (both detached single-family and apartments)
CHALLENGES	Street lighting; public safety and vandalism; poverty/homelessness; heavy industrial/environmental concerns; traffic safety; home ownership/renting
OPPORTUNITIES	Public art; expand greenspace/limit or remove concrete; maintaining the aquifer

Key topic	What we heard
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to public transportation • Angled street parking • Support for bike lanes (painted vs. protected, etc.) • Lane reduction on South Tacoma Way • Traffic calming between S 50th St and S 56th St • Improve street lighting for driving visibility and safety • Additional traffic signals/signs
SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS DISTRICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reenforce existing vibrancy • Litter management/removal
ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve greenspace quality and quantity • Address environmental and public health impacts
WALKABILITY AND CONNECTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve sidewalk quality and connectivity
SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community art projects • Car shows • Preserve community character
PERSONAL SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More police presence • Improve street lighting • Address homelessness
SPACE FOR GATHERING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase parks/greenspace
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No heavy industrial zoning over the aquifer” • “No heavy industrial mega warehouse” • Enforce nuisance codes • Maintain housing types in South Tacoma
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free gyms for youth • Activities for young people • Resources for disadvantaged people • Senior centers and services



South Tacoma Way Neighborhood Plan



What do you love about South Tacoma?

Quality of life first & foremost!

Stop 2 million of...
...to...
...to...

create better trails on...
...walkways

Tell us what you think!

Do not take away quality of life by building...
...Leave single dwelling...
...alone

...FEEL ALIVE!

What specific issues or challenges do you see in South Tacoma?

Very poor Air Quality!

stop...
...walkways

A lot of people...
...not enough...
...lights

Need more crosswalks on South Tacoma way

No heavy industrial...
...nearby

To have more safety and a solution to...

...safety...
...transportation

...clean up

...houses

What are the opportunities to enhance what you love and/or address neighborhood challenges?

MORE PUBLIC ART

No heavy industrial zoning over the quarter (clean water!)

...the...
...walkways

...Keep single family homes in South Tacoma...
...Do not rezone!

...No...
...Preserve the quarter!!

...single family...

About the South Tacoma Way Neighborhood Planning program
We're working in South Tacoma to create a Neighborhood Plan, which will support neighborhood identity, identify a vision for the future, and then help to implement that vision over the next 2-3 years.



Thank you for your input!

You can share additional feedback through our online survey: engage.piercecounty.gov/socialpinpoint.com/southtacomanp

Or email us at: neighborhoodplanning@cityoftacoma.org



South Tacoma Way Neighborhood Plan



What we've been hearing:

Transportation safety: concerns about speeding vehicles; desire for traffic calming

Support for business district: neighbors enjoy the local commercial spaces, but would like to see more vibrancy

Environment: neighbors are concerned about local air and water quality, as well as potential environmental impacts of new industrial development

Walkability and connectivity: desire for a complete sidewalk network and better pedestrian infrastructure, as well as multimodal connections in and out of the neighborhood

Sense of community and identity: friendly neighbors, pride in South Tacoma's rich and diverse history, questions about the center of the neighborhood

Personal safety: neighbors are concerned about crime and impacts on local businesses

Space for gathering: South Tacoma could benefit from more access to indoor and outdoor community space

Development: concerns about potential impacts of new development, such as loss of affordability

Resources: neighbors could benefit from easier access to essential businesses, such as grocery stores

Tell us what you think!

Community feedback board with sticky notes and a handwritten note:

- Stop the noise pollution
- Leave a note!
- slow down to one lane more parking
- stop at Myra's
- my air quality at my house in So Tacoma - please have Air Quality tested & do something to improve it
- Screening for... (Screening for... placed 2 weeks prior to this sample.)

