

Determination of Significance Notice of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Public Scoping

Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan and Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement

SEPA File Number: LU23-0129

Proponent: City of Tacoma (City)

Project Name: Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan and Planned Action EIS, also known as Picture Pac Ave

Funding: The Subarea Plan and EIS are jointly funded by the City of Tacoma, Department of Commerce, Pierce Transit, and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department.

Description of the Proposal: The Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan (Picture Pac Ave) will create a community-shaped vision for growth and development along the Pacific Avenue corridor, from I-5 to South 96th Street. The proposed project involves the development of an innovative, area-wide subarea plan for the corridor, which will become an optional element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The subarea plan is expected to include elements related to land use, economic development, the environment, public facilities and services, and transportation.

Planned Action Environmental Review: A planned action environmental review involves detailed State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review and preparation of EIS documents in conjunction with subarea plans, consistent with [RCW 43.21C.031](#), [RCW 43.21C.440](#), and [WAC 197-11-164](#) through [WAC 197-11-172](#). Completing a non-project EIS presents a cumulative impact analysis for the entire subarea, rather than piecemeal analysis of the environmental impacts and mitigation on a project-by-project basis. As a result, the environmental impacts and mitigation are comprehensively evaluated at the subarea-wide level. Such up-front analysis of impacts and mitigation measures then facilitates environmental review of subsequent individual development projects. The City would not make a threshold determination and may not require additional environmental review for a future development proposal that is determined to be consistent with the planned action ordinance. This will provide certainty and predictability for both development proposals and the community, streamline the environmental review process within the subarea, and encourage the goals of SEPA¹ and the State's Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW). Community members, agencies, and tribes are encouraged to participate and provide comment during this planned action environmental review effort while the evaluation is under preparation since it will guide future development proposals and future threshold determinations would be limited.

Location: The Plan area includes the Pacific Avenue (SR-7) corridor from approximately I-5 in the north to the city limits of Tacoma in the south near South 96th Street with an additional portion extending south to South 99th Street. The plan will encompass an approximately quarter-mile walkshed around the Pacific Avenue Corridor ([see map](#)). However, depending on the topic under review, studies and

¹ SEPA is the State Environmental Policy Act (Chapter 43.21C RCW). Regulations that implement SEPA are called the SEPA Rules (Chapter 197-11 WAC).



recommendations from the Plan process will likely extend beyond this Plan area, including the lands immediately adjacent to the Plan area. The City of Tacoma intends to designate this Pacific Avenue Subarea as a planned action under the provisions of RCW43.21C.440.

Lead Agency: The City of Tacoma is lead agency for SEPA compliance.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Required: The City of Tacoma has determined that the Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact. An EIS under RCW 43.21C.030(2) (c) will be prepared. This decision was made after review of information on-file with the City. Preliminary indications are that the following environmental parameters will be evaluated in this EIS:

- Transportation
- Land Use
- Housing

In addition to the parameters listed above, the City is partnering with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department to conduct analyses to determine human health risks.

Alternatives: It is proposed that the EIS analyze several alternatives as part of the Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan. The alternatives include a No Action Alternative and at least two Action Alternatives. It is anticipated that the alternatives will be based on variations of elements such as the mix of zoning and land uses, employment and population growth scenarios, transition areas, and housing types and location. The Action Alternatives could include context sensitive variations in the geographic applicability of the mid-and-low scale residential zoning designations being proposed through Home in Tacoma as well as a potential new Neighborhood Mixed Use Center encompassing the Pacific Avenue Business District near South 56th and Pacific Avenue. They may also include scenarios with more concentrated or dispersed development patterns, including accommodating more housing and jobs near transit stations, among others, throughout the Subarea.

For purposes of the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that development would occur within the Pacific Avenue Subarea based on existing zoning and development standards. Development or redevelopment that is proposed within the Pacific Avenue Subarea in conjunction with the No Action Alternative would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis. Such projects would be subject to site-specific mitigation and potential SEPA-based appeals.

EIS Scoping: Agencies, affected tribes and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of this proposed EIS. You may comment on the alternatives, probable significant adverse impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. Methods for presenting your comments are described below.

The scoping process is being provided pursuant to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-408. The City of Tacoma is allowing 43 days for comment rather than the required 21 days.

Please note that the City of Tacoma does not discriminate on the basis of disability in any of its programs, activities, or services. To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 253-591-5505. TTY or speech-to-speech users please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Services.



Comment Deadline: All comments are due no later than 4:30 pm on Thursday, August 31, 2023, Pacific Standard Time

Methods to Provide Comments:

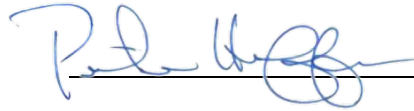
- **Written comments may be submitted:**
Online at www.cityoftacoma.org/picturepacave by clicking the button labelled “Submit SEPA Scoping Comment.”

By mail to:
City of Tacoma, Planning and Development Services
Attn: Wesley Rhodes, Senior Planner, Long Range Planning Division
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402

Project-related information can be reviewed on the project website at:
www.cityoftacoma.org/picturepacave.

Responsible Official: Peter Huffman
Position/Title: Director, Planning and Development Services Department

Signature:



Issue Date: July 20, 2023
Comment Deadline: August 31, 2023

