



AGENDA

MEETING: Regular Meeting

TIME: Wednesday, August 7, 2019, 5:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Council Chambers, 1st Floor, Tacoma Municipal Building
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

A. Call to Order and Quorum Call

B. Approval of Agenda and Minutes (July 17, 2019)

C. Public Comments

- Comments are accepted on Discussion Items and are limited to 3 minutes per person.

D. Discussion Items

1. Urban Design Studio

- Description: Review status of project, draft operations manual and draft design principles.
- Action: Guidance
- Staff Contact: Mesa Sherriff, 253-591-5480, msherriff@cityoftacoma.org

2. Planning Commission Rules and Regulations (“Bylaws”)

- Description: Review and consider appropriate amendments to the Commission’s Bylaws.
- Action: Approval
- Staff Contact: Lihuang Wung, 253-591-5682, lwung@cityoftacoma.org

E. Topics of the Upcoming Meeting (August 21, 2019)

- (1) Environmental Action Plan Update

F. Communication Items

- (1) **2019 Amendment Public Hearing** – The City Council will conduct a public hearing on Tuesday, August 20, 2019, at 5:15 p.m., in the Council Chambers, concerning the 2019 Amendment as recommended by the Planning Commission. For more information, please visit www.cityoftacoma.org/2019Amendments.
- (2) **2019 Amendment Informational Meeting** – Planning staff will conduct an informational meeting on the 2019 Amendment, to prepare interested citizens for the City Council’s public hearing. The informational meeting will be on Thursday, August 15, 2019, 5:30-7:00 p.m., at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center. For more information, please visit www.cityoftacoma.org/2019Amendments.
- (3) The next meeting of the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee is on Wednesday, August 7, 2019, at 4:30 p.m., in Room 248; tentative agenda (subject to change) includes: Board of Building Appeals Interviews; Transportation Commission Interviews; Name Policy Discussion; and Saltmarsh Park Renaming.

A. Adjournment





MINUTES (DRAFT)

TIME: Wednesday, July 17, 5:00 p.m.
PLACE: Council Chambers, Tacoma Municipal Building, 1st Floor
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Carolyn Edmonds, Ryan Givens, David Horne, Jeff McInnis, Brett Santhuff, Andrew Strobel, Alyssa Torrez
ABSENT: Anna Petersen (Chair)

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Commissioner McInnis called the meeting to order at 5:06pm. A quorum was declared.

Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division, reviewed administrative items including meeting procedures when the Chair and Vice-Chair are not present and swear-in of Commissioners.

Doris Sorum, City's Clerk Office, swore in Commissioner Torrez (newly appointed) and Commissioner Givens (recently re-appointed).

Commissioner Santhuff nominated Commissioner McInnis as Chair pro tem. The Commission voted in favor of the nomination unanimously.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the June 5, 2019 and June 19, 2019 meetings were approved as submitted.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG)

Mr. Boudet noted that with Commissioner Waller's resignation, the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) committee made a nomination to City Council to reassign Commissioner Edmonds, currently representing Public Transportation, to District 2 and make the Public Transportation position available for interviews.

Ian Munce, Planning Services Division, provided context for the need of the Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG), which is to give input for transit projects on various aspects such as streetscape improvement, design features, housing vicinity, etc. Mr. Munce referred the Commission to materials provided in their packet for information on the representation of potential members. He also noted that staff hoped to schedule the first TODAG meeting next month before the Urban Land Institute Technical Advisory Panel meeting regarding the Dome District in mid-September. He requested one or two members from the Commission to join the TODAG and welcomed any feedback or questions they might have.

Commissioner Edmonds inquired about the possibility of appointing the Public Transportation representative from the Commission to the TODAG, essentially deferring naming a specific commissioner. Mr. Boudet clarified that Commissioner Edmonds would remain the Public Transportation representative until the City Council makes a decision otherwise and suggested that she take on the TODAG in the meantime.

Commissioner Givens volunteered to serve on the TODAG as it has an urban design component. He recommended having a developer on the committee, to which Mr. Munce noted that staff had been in communication with some developers. Commissioner Santhuff concurred with Commissioner Givens and commented favorably to the Dome District being the focus area for the first step, but also suggested looking at other areas, specifically the Portland Avenue station.

2. 2020 Amendment Assessment – Determination

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, provided opening remarks on the 2020 Amendment package and stated the purpose of discussion, which is to finalize the 2020 Amendment docket and to finalize any modifications of the applications. He then reviewed the annual amendment process and explained criteria in the Land Use Code that the Commission is to consider while making their decision to whether accept, deny, or modify the applications. A timeline of next steps and recap of the four applications were presented. Mr. Atkinson also noted that in a 2-year process, private applications are accepted for consideration, which Heidelberg-Davis Land Use Designation and West Slope Neighborhood View Sensitive Overlay District are.

(1) HEIDELBERG-DAVIS LAND USE DESIGNATION

Larry Harala, Planning Services Division, provided a summary of the application and the information provided in packet to the Commission. From the public scoping process, the comments mostly came from the Central Neighborhood Council concerning information about the proposal and the future of the area under the new designation. If the application is approved for further analysis, staff would ensure the community concerns are well-advised. Mr. Harala also recapped questions from the Commission, emphasizing communication with Tacoma Public Schools. Staff recommendation is to accept the application as proposed. Another scoping option is to re-designate the site as a Mixed Use Center; but in this early stage, the proposed designation is sufficient to allow Metro Parks Tacoma's plan for the soccer stadium project.

Commissioner Edmonds commented that, assuming the application moved forward, she wanted to make sure the skateboard park is not overlooked for its usage and importance to the youth.

Discussion ensued surrounding Commissioner Strobel's question about whether the Commission would actively continue considering the proposal if Metro Parks Tacoma amended or withdrew the application. Mr. Boudet noted that the decision could go either way, dependent on various factors regarding the soccer stadium project and the Commission's standpoint. Commissioner Edmonds expressed her support and offered an alternative perspective that without going forward with the application, there likely would be no fund to support the stadium concept. Commissioner Givens and Chair McInnis voiced their support as well and discussed the scope of project.

Mr. Atkinson asked for verification on concerns and recommendations from the Commission for staff analysis.

(2) WEST SLOPE NEIGHBORHOOD VIEW SENSITIVE OVERLAY DISTRICT

Mr. Harala provided an overview of the application. Community feedback was received both at the Public Scoping Hearing and via emails. The comments are mostly in support of the application. The main concerns are whether to consider nearby areas for the application and whether the application reflects the interest of the whole neighborhood. He explained the intent of View Sensitive District (VSD) in the City code and went

on to present preliminary LIDAR data on potential VSD-20 areas (i.e., VSD areas where the height limit would be reduced from the current 25' to 20'). There are areas in Tacoma that have similar height profiles and characteristics to the Narrowmoor area. Staff recommendation is to accept the application but also look at other areas, specifically through the West Slope area, to broaden the scope.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Givens began by stating that he was uncomfortable with the application moving forward, for the applicant, West Slope Neighborhood Coalition, had not built consensus among the residents before submitting the application. This was concurred by Commissioner Strobel, who also inquired about the definition and intent of VSD, and whether they protect public or private views. Commissioner Horne agreed, noting that he would prefer considering new areas for VSD rather than existing ones and would not want the application to move forward unless it was city-wide. Commissioner Santhuff and Chair McInnis were in support of the application and prepared to proceed with staff recommendation, with a modification of expanding the scope to include areas similar to Narrowmoor. Commissioner Edmonds input that the common concern of the Commission is about the VSD itself, not any specific areas, but the Commission needed to make a decision about the application.

Mr. Harala noted that he had preliminary data, particularly information on how the County taxes properties for view, to share with the Commission. Mr. Boudet gave brief explanation on VSD intention according to the current code, and suggested an interim vote on the application before voting for the packet.

In attempt to reach consensus, Commissioner Givens referred to the One Tacoma Plan and suggested accepting the application with a modification to include Pattern Area Number 1. Commissioner Strobel wanted to carry out a scoping process to understand the VSD before identifying areas to study.

Mr. Boudet explained staff intention for recommending acceptance, noting that it was impractical to spend the next few months adjusting the scope before moving forward. Re-evaluating the VSD as a whole is a broad question and beyond the capacity of the annual amendment process.

Chair McInnis agreed that the topic of discussion should be contained to whether to accept or deny the application. He asked for a show of hands from those in support of moving the application forward in some form. There were three votes (Chair McInnis, Commissioner Santhuff, and Commissioner Edmonds) for moving forward and four votes (Commissioner Strobel, Commissioner Torrez, Commissioner Givens, and Commissioner Horne) against. He stated for the record that no one was in favor of moving the application forward with just Narrowmoor neighborhood. He also asked if there was any other procedure that the applicant might go through to advance their application if the Commission denied it. Mr. Boudet explained that unless the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee deemed the issue a priority and recalled the application, it was generally up to the Commission.

(3) TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS

Mr. Atkinson gave an overview of the amendments and summarized the public comments. Some of the key requests from the community were prioritization of pedestrians in downtown and consideration for broader walkability and parking for 6th Avenue corridor. He also provided a timeline for next steps in the process.

Staff recommendation is to accept the application with the modification to include the 6th Avenue issue identified in the public comments.

(4) MINOR PLAN AND CODE AMENDMENTS

Mr. Atkinson stated that the amendments are to update codes and address errors and inconsistencies. He noted that the public comments highlighted concerns about parking in the Dome District and proximity reduction on residential yard space requirements. He also addressed requests from the Commission about bonus incentives in the R-3 and R-4L districts.

Staff recommendation is to accept the application with the modification to include the three aforementioned issues.

In summary, Mr. Atkinson reiterated staff recommendation of the four applications and reviewed the preliminary discussion of the Commission to accept the (1) Heidelberg-Davis Land Use Designation, (3) Transportation Master Plan Amendments, and (4) Minor Plan and Code Amendments applications and to

deny the (2) West Slope Neighborhood View Sensitive Overlay District application. He asked for further discussion if any, and requested a motion from the Commission.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion to finalize the docket for 2020 Amendments to include the (1) Heidelberg-Davis Land Use Designation, (2) West Slope Neighborhood View Sensitive Overlay District, (3) Transportation Master Plan Amendments, and (4) Minor Plan and Code Amendments with the staff recommendations. Commissioner Santhuff seconded the motion.

Commissioner Givens asked if the Commission could decide on the scope of each project after finalizing the docket. Mr. Boudet explained that it was important to keep the scope in mind while deciding. This assessment process is basically the scoping process.

The Commission voted on the motion and it passed 4:3. Chair McInnis, Commissioner Givens, Commissioner Santhuff, and Commissioner Edmonds voted in support of the motion. Commissioner Strobel, Commissioner Torrez, and Commissioner Horne voted in opposition.

Mr. Boudet clarified that the staff recommendation for the scope of the VSD application was to, within the existing VSD areas, look for areas of consistent development patterns.

Given the close vote, Chair McInnis wanted staff to make sure to take into consideration issues identified by opposing Commissioners.

The meeting was recessed at 6:49pm and resumed at 6:56pm.

3. Planning Commission Annual Report 2018-2019 and Work Program 2019-2021

Mr. Boudet gave opening remarks. He went over the 2019 projects, emphasizing the annual amendments and detailing each. Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) were also mentioned. Despite being a small project, it was significant. It was the third time in 20 years that the City looked at DADUs and decided to move forward this time. Other highlighted projects were Open Space Current Use Assessment, Airport Compatibility Overlay District, and Tacoma Dome Link Extension. He also commended the Commission for having meetings in different areas in the community.

Mr. Boudet provided an overview of each project in the Work Program 2019-2021. He presented a chart displaying sequencing of the projects and their timeline. The chart helps keep track of ongoing projects and avoid having too many at once. One common issue is people getting notified of too many issues at the same time that leads to confusion.

Commissioner Santhuff asked about the Commission updated bylaws, specifically the attendance policy, and if there would be any consequence on absences. Mr. Boudet stated that he would check and get back to the Commission, also noting that it was generally left to the Chair to communicate with the Commissioners. Commissioner Santhuff also questioned if the issues that the Commission had worked on, in particular the Portland Avenue corridor, would show up on the future work programs. Mr. Boudet explained that the hope was to add more corridors to the Subarea Plan, but they needed funding before being put on the Work Program.

E. TOPICS OF THE UPCOMING MEETING (AUGUST 7, 2019)

- (1) Urban Design Studio
- (2) Residential Infill Pilot Program 2.0
 - a. Mr. Boudet noted that Residential Infill Pilot Program 2.0 might not be on the agenda for the next meeting.

F. COMMUNICATION ITEMS

- (1) Mr. Boudet reminded the Commission that the IPS committee made a nomination to City Council to reassign Commissioner Edmonds, currently representing Public Transportation, to District 2 and make

the Public Transportation position available for interviews. Commissioner Edmonds expressed concern about her potential change of position, stating that there was a lack of open application process and communication to the District 2 community.

- (2) The Elected Leadership Group for Tacoma Dome Link Extension met and made a recommendation to the Sound Transit Board to consider underground station options in the Tacoma Dome area. Various other agencies expressed opposition to the recommendation.
- (3) Affordable Housing Actions Strategies are now having quarterly updates provided to the City Council.
- (4) Commissioner Torrez gave self-introduction with brief bio on education and work background.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27pm.

**These minutes are not a direct transcription of the meeting, but rather a brief capture. For full-length audio recording of the meeting, please visit:*

http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/committees_boards_commissions/planning_commission/agendas_and_minutes/



To: Planning Commission
From: Mesa Sherriff, Senior Planner, Planning Services Division
Subject: **Urban Design Studio**
Meeting Date: August 7, 2019
Memo Date: July 31, 2019

Action Requested

Comment and Guidance.

Discussion:

At a previous meeting on June 19, 2019, the Planning Commission reviewed and provided feedback on the Urban Design Studio. More specifically, staff provided findings from the initial Project Advisory Group Meeting (PAG) and Technical Advisory Group Meeting (TAC). In Addition, Staff received guidance to focus Design Review on the following areas;

1. Mixed Use Centers
2. Pedestrian Corridors
3. Downtown

In each of these areas, the Planning Commission identified transitions between zones, particularly residential zones adjacent to non-residential zones, as requiring special attention to mitigate negative impacts.

At the next meeting on August 7, 2019, the Planning Commission will receive a briefing on the staffing and committee requirements to administer Design Review in the above areas. A summary of design review in other jurisdictions will be provided as well as an update on the Operations Manual and Design Guidelines.

For more information, the website www.cityoftacoma.org/urbandesign will be regularly updated with information and documents related to the project.

Project Summary:

The City of Tacoma has studied the idea of developing a comprehensive design review program to enhance the quality of the built environment throughout the City. The City currently operates two narrowly focused design review systems, one for historic districts and buildings, and the other for the Foss Waterway redevelopment area. Over the last few years, the concept of a broader Urban Design Studio that would build and administer a citywide design review program, as well as visually communicate zoning and development to City staff and residents has evolved. Positions were created over the last two budget cycles and the Urban Design Studio was established in 2018.

The focus of The Urban Design Studio is to work with the community, development partners, and other departments and agencies to advance the design quality of places citywide. The program's mission is to build upon Tacoma's unique setting and history, our special character and our changing population, to elevate the quality of public and private spaces and create a more vibrant, livable, walkable, and sustainable city. The program will oversee a design review process and will work to translate visions and ideas into policy and objectives that result in guidelines and projects, with the intention of forwarding community-supported design.



Staff Contact:

- Mesa Sherriff, Senior Planner, msherriff@cityoftacoma.org, (253) 591-5480

Attachments:

1. Draft Operations Manual
2. Draft table of Contents for Design Guidelines
3. Draft Urban Design Principles

cc. Peter Huffman, Director

Tacoma UDS Operations Manual

City of Tacoma Urban Design Review Program

INTERNAL OPERATIONS MANUAL

Draft 1: July 16, 2019

Introduction

This manual is the strategic plan for operating the Urban Design Studio in the department of Planning and Development Services. It includes:

- Vision and goals
- Timeline for growth, implementation, and rollout of key projects and functions
- Recommendations for necessary resources including software, consultants, and staff
- Recommended organizational relationships and roles

Relationship to other character-management tools

The city's design review system operates in concert with its established historic preservation program. The historic preservation program (with its historic and conservation districts and special review overlays) will continue to operate as a separate unit but closely allied with the Urban Design Review Program.

Relationship to SEPA

The SEPA commenting process provides some opportunity for design review, but developers generally try to avoid it, and there are no clear guidelines for it that are related to design. Where a SEPA review is triggered, it will follow the review by the Urban Design Studio.

PART I: Vision and Goals

This section presents the vision and goals for the urban design program. It is an amalgam of goals and objectives set forth in the city's Comprehensive Plan as well as related policy statements.

Goals for the UDRP:

- To improve the quality of design in Tacoma
- To raise the awareness of and appreciation for high quality design in the city
- To implement policies and goals set forth in the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan related to design and quality of the built environment

Vision: The Urban Design Review Program should be:

- Highly effective and efficiently operated
- Scaled to fit the city's administrative resources, and:
- Flexible, yet predictable in its process and outcomes
- Applied equitably throughout the city and
- Related to special community concerns, including:
 - Affordable housing
 - Sustainability

Tacoma UDS Operations Manual

Objectives of the program are to:

- Improve upon the city's existing development review process
- Support high quality, sustainable, and compatible development
- Support equitable growth and development
- Provide community education and be a resource to the community
- Administer the program effectively and within the department's administrative capacity
- Provide a user-friendly and understandable interface
- Be flexible and promote innovation
- Encourage public involvement at appropriate levels
- Integrate the program with other city permitting processes

Planning for Success

It is important that the program demonstrates success from the outset. Because it is beginning with a modest budget and staffing, phasing in some program components, in balance with resources, is essential. The first priority is to establish the building blocks of a good urban design program review process before getting into more detailed guidance for individual neighborhoods or sub-areas. Some key aspects of phasing are:

1. Sufficient tools (codes, guidelines and procedural materials) must be in place before an official launch
2. Sufficient human resources must be in place for effective administration (staff, board, etc.)
3. The design guidelines are appropriately tailored to each phase of implementation. Initially, they will operate at a "high level" and be tailored to the most critical geographic areas and building types.

Positioning the program

The program respects Tacoma's character and culture. It does not impose models from other cities; instead, it builds on Tacoma's sense of identity and its values. In doing so it will:

- Anchor the guidelines in the city's design traditions
- Express community values
- Focus on enhancing, not recreating the city

PART II: THE SCOPE OF DESIGN REVIEW

Geographic Application

The review system will be implemented in phases, in concert with administrative capabilities. This will include:

1. **CENTERS**

These Centers are defined in the Comprehensive Plan:

- Regional (including downtown)
- Crossroads
- Neighborhood

2. **COMMERCIAL & MIXED-USE ZONES ALONG CORRIDORS**

Those portions of all corridors indicated as commercial and mixed use in the Comprehensive Plan:

- Avenues
- Mainstreets

3. **MULTIFAMILY DISTRICTS ALONG CORRIDORS**

Those portions of all corridors indicated as multifamily in the Comprehensive Plan.

Using Thresholds

In addition to its geographic application, the system will use thresholds as a means of limiting the number of projects reviewed to a volume that can be administered effectively. Using thresholds will:

1. Tailor the work load to fit the administrative capability at various stages of program implementation
2. Focus review on projects most likely to accomplish the city's goals for design quality that are adopted in the Comprehensive Plan

Addressing single family neighborhoods

Single family residential projects are not to be a part of the design review system at this stage. Instead, other tools that may focus on single family projects are:

- Improved underlying zoning with form-based standards
- Conservation Districts
- Historic Districts
- Educational materials that highlight compatible design

Project Tracking

The city will use its web-based permitting platform (Accela) for Design Review. In this system, an applicant can apply for permits, make payments and track their project's status online. These are some factors in project tracking:

Design Review Process

Applicants must go through the design review process prior to the start of work or issuance of permits. Most simple projects take two to four weeks to review from the point of application. More complex projects can require several meetings, including informational briefings during design development.

Submitting Plans for Preliminary Review

By submitting plans through the Accela permitting system, the project will be reviewed for applicable codes. Generally, variances and conditional use permits must be obtained prior to design review.

Scheduling Review

Upon receiving an application, staff will review it for completeness. If the project qualifies for Administrative Approval, staff will then initiate review. If the project meets the requirements for review by the Design Review Board, it will be placed on the next available agenda. Applications must be complete two weeks in advance of the desired meeting date. An applicant will be notified when their project has been scheduled for review.

Apply for Permits

Once design review approval is granted, an applicant may obtain the required permits. In some cases, land use review or plans review may occur concurrently with the design review process.

PART III: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**Studio structure**

The Urban Design Studio consists of a team of professionals with expertise in urban design along with administrative support personnel.

The Urban Design Studio is responsible for:

1. Managing the design review program
 - This includes reviewing projects, making determinations of appropriateness and working with the Design Review Board.
2. Engaging in public outreach
 - This includes community engagement to build awareness of design
 - Building a constituency of advocates for high quality design
3. Serving as a resource to community in matters related to urban design
 - This includes assisting designers, property owners and staff from other departments in dealing with design issues.

Roles in the design review system

These are the roles of the key players:

Staff

Staff of the Urban Design Studio is comprised of professionals in architecture, landscape architecture or urban design as well as administrative support staff. Their responsibilities include:

1. Outreach
 - A. Public presentations
 - To build general awareness of urban design
 - To engage the community in developing design guidelines and other policies related to urban design
 - B. Web site materials
 - Providing content that promotes urban design
 - Providing on-line interface for project applicants

2. Developing program-related tools
 - A. Design guidelines
 - B. Educational materials about urban design
 - C. Administrative forms
3. Facilitation
 - A. Technical assistance
 - Assisting property owners and their architects in interpreting the guidelines
 - B. Coordination with other permitting processes
 - Meeting with other department representatives to collaborate on permit application review
4. Decision-making (Design Review)
 - A. The Director (with the support of the Urban Design Studio staff) should be the decision-maker for as many projects as is feasible.
 - B. In other cases, staff will provide recommendations to the Design Review Board.
5. General administration
 - A. General administration (e.g. maintaining files, scheduling, etc)
 - B. Annual report (a summary of activities, including design review actions)

The Design Review Board

The Design Review Board (DRB) is a key part of the system. The objective is to use the board strategically, to:

- Keep the process as efficient as possible
- Serve as a support to staff on difficult projects
- Provide a mechanism for public participation without overburdening the process
- Bring in additional expertise in design-related fields

The Board should meet at a frequency that keeps their review skills honed, but not to the extent that they are bogged down with extensive agendas. The purpose of the DRB is to promote high quality building design and site planning that enhances the character of the city. The Board reviews proposed projects for consistency with adopted design guidelines.

Roles of the design review board are:

1. To approve projects:
 - In sensitive locations
 - Projects above a defined threshold
 - Civic projects
2. To advise the Director on making decisions
 - For all projects of a defined type or threshold
 - For others that staff feels the need for advice
3. As an appeals body for staff decisions
 - An applicant has the right to appeal a staff decision to the board.

Membership in the DRB

Members of the DRB will be appointed by City Council and should consist of seven (7) active members who represent the following categories:

1. At least two members should be from design and planning professions:
 - Licensed architect
 - Licensed landscape architect
 - Urban planner
 - Urban designer
2. At least one member should be from the construction and building fields:
 - Licensed civil engineer
 - Licensed contractor
 - Builder/Developer
3. At least one member should represent the professions of graphic design, signage and wayfinding.
4. At least one member should represent the community at large and not be from the above listed professions.

All individuals who seek appointment to the DRB should have a demonstrated interest in the design of the community and be motivated by a desire to serve fellow members of the community. Members of the board should be persons who, as a result of their training and experience, are qualified to analyze and interpret architectural and landscape drawings and site plans.

Each member of the design review board shall be a resident of the city. Elected officials may not serve on the board.

The role of the public in design review

A key concern is that the public should have sufficient opportunity to participate in the design review program and its approval process while also doing so in an efficient manner that does not unduly delay the process. Ideally, the public participates in developing design guidelines and in monitoring the system, and only comments on individual projects when necessary. The public should participate in these ways:

1. Establishing the design review tools

The public should participate in developing:

- Ordinance revisions that enable the design review process
- Design guidelines
- Operations tools and procedures

This is a key engagement method, when the guidelines are being developed. The expectation is that, when clear guidelines are in place and professionals are administering the system, there is less need for public comment on individual projects.

2. Reviewing the system

A periodic review and assessment of the system (annually at first and later at every 5 years) should include a public outreach component. Topics to address should include:

- How well have the guidelines addressed the issues?

- How effective is the review process in achieving its goals?

The concept is that the public monitors the overall system, and discussion occurs in special meetings, not during regular board meetings or individual staff reviews.

3. Reviewing the reviewer

The public should participate in a periodic (bi-annual) review of how staff and the board are performing. Topics to address should include:

- Debrief a selection of projects received in the past year
 - How effective was the process?
 - Do the results help to accomplish the goals for design?
- Discuss ways to improve interpretation of the guidelines

4. Participating in informational meetings for projects that are referred to a neighborhood

The Director may determine that some projects merit a presentation to the community in an informational meeting. This is not a formal decision-making hearing, but one at which a project may be presented and comments can be received in an informal format. Highlights of the comments should be reported in a staff memo, which may then be considered in a staff decision or in a report to the Design Review Board.

5. Testifying on individual projects

For those projects scheduled for a public hearing, members of the public may testify during the formal public comment period for an agenda item.

6. The role of neighborhood councils

Neighborhood Councils may be invited to participate in the periodic system reviews.

3. Training

Staff and the DRB should participate in an annual training session on design review. The agenda should include a refresher on the content of the design guidelines, as well as meeting procedures and techniques for effective decision-making. This may be an in-house event or it may be a program presented at a conference or other meeting of similar boards and professionals.

PART IV: THE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Planning Commission has prioritized design review to occur in the Downtown, designated centers and key corridors. Given that, there are these factors to consider:

Incentives for design excellence:

Public investment follows (or better yet precedes) private improvements, thus serving as a stimulus. There is more likelihood of the development community accepting the design review program if the areas where it is to be implemented are also seeing public investment now or in the future. For example, the city's plans for transit enhancement and streetscape improvements along certain corridors should be considered when setting geographic boundaries for initial phases of design review.

Considering context

Tacoma UDS Operations Manual

In the early stages of a design review project, context will be considered at a high level. The design guidelines will not be tailored to specific settings. Nonetheless, it will be helpful to require documentation of the context in a project's submittal package, in part in anticipation of later phases in which guidelines for more specific contexts may be developed.

The downtown plan identifies different sub-areas that can be used as high level contexts for design review. Along the corridors, those places that immediately abut established lower-density residential neighborhoods are candidates for considering context as well, especially in terms of providing gentle transitions.

Sub-areas along corridors

The corridors are defined in the Comprehensive Plan. These include sections that have commercial and higher density residential uses as well as mixed-use properties. These are the areas where design review for corridors should be targeted. There are other portions of these corridors that are lower density residential. These should not be included in the design review program, at least in these initial implementation stages, in order to keep the number of projects reviewed manageable.

Adaptive reuse

Supporting adaptive reuse of existing buildings is a concern, particularly for older commercial strip centers that may transition to more urban environments. To what extent are the conflicts with zoning requirements (which might be addressed in this project), versus other codes? An example is that adding canopies to a building can trigger requirements for structural upgrades. Some codes make it clear that certain changes to the property (and even changes in use) do not trigger full compliance with other codes. What are the triggers for meeting new code requirements in adaptive reuse? For site work? For parking compliance? While an adaptive reuse program should be a separate initiative, the design guidelines should address this topic.

Projected work load

A series of charts (excel spreadsheets) is attached in the Appendix. The charts estimate the potential number of projects that will be reviewed annually and the amount of staff and board time that will be required. This assumes that thresholds will be set for projects sizes. Small projects will not be subject to design review. For those that are subject to review, the priority is to have staff make decisions to the extent feasible. Board review would be targeted at larger and more complex projects. As the design review program becomes well-established and as more staff can be added, the thresholds for review may be adjusted to include more projects.

PART V: PHASING IN THE PROGRAM

While priorities for phasing have been identified by the Planning Commission, there may be fine-grained adjustments, based on these criteria:

Follow transit improvements

Higher density development is encouraged to cluster around transit service. Some of these areas are targeted for enhancement. This public investment can serve as a magnet for new development, which should comply with best practices in urban design.

This also will help developers comply with guidelines that seek to bring buildings closer to the street edge and at grade level. Otherwise, asking private property development to comply when the public realm is in transition, or is planned to change is a challenge. That is, requiring a new commercial building to be located at the sidewalk edge with an entrance onto the street may be difficult to accomplish when a change in the street design is anticipated for the future.

Benchmarking for phased implementation of the program

Indicators should be established that identify when it is appropriate to move to a subsequent phase of implementation. Benchmarking should include:

- Reaching a threshold in the number of projects seeking permits in a defined category
- Evaluation of the preceding stage to document its success
- Implementation of Comprehensive Plan policies related to design

Early phasing possibilities for using design guidelines

1. Use the design guidelines in existing permitting processes when the director exercises authority to vary some standards in the code (10%).
2. Use the design guidelines when compliance with the Comprehensive Plan is considered in project review.
3. As a required "informational" review
4. Conduct site design only for some locations and phase Building Design review in later
5. Limit review to "high level" site design topics
 - a. Internal streets / street-like lanes
 - b. Cut and fill / terracing
 - c. Internal pedestrian circulation
 - d. Connectivity at site edges
6. The Commercial zones (because the code is being updated now and audit recommendations could be implemented soon)
7. Civic buildings: At a minimum design review could be established for civic buildings and other public projects.
8. By threshold:
 - a. Only buildings greater than an established square footage (See the Appendix for suggested thresholds.)
 - b. Only sites greater than an established square footage
9. Only sites with slopes greater than an established percentage
10. Areas designated for public realm investment in the near-term
11. Areas designated as "pedestrian streets"
12. Areas programmed for transit in upcoming years

PART VI: SYSTEM MECHANICS

This section includes some specific provisions for operating the program.

Procedures for design review

The approval process has these four steps:

1. Informational consultation (This is optional, to be requested by the applicant.)
 - a. The applicant may request an initial visit with staff to discuss their project and outline the steps involved.
2. Preliminary application (This step is to be required.)
 - a. This is a change in current procedures.
 - b. Review will be at the staff level.
 - c. Staff will issue a report, stating the requirements for changes and additional information based on this preliminary application step.
3. Final application (This step is required.)
 - a. This will include:
 - i. An analysis of how the applicant has satisfied the guidelines
 - ii. This review step may be by staff or the board, as defined by thresholds.
4. Follow-up for compliance
 - a. This includes site inspections by urban design staff as well as code compliance officers.

Preliminary design review application

The pre-application step should be re-framed as a "Preliminary" application, to make it clear that it is a formal step. What is the correct level of detail that should be required for this step? Presently, there is no formal list of requirements. The pre-application requirement should include a site plan. (See also the preceding discussion "project tracking.")

Fees for design review

Fees will be charged for design review services. There are three alternative approaches for a fee structure:

Fee option 1: Recover all costs of review

This establishes the program as a self-sustaining cost center. This approach can support increasing the number of staff as the program expands. In this approach, fees may be charged on an hourly basis, or they may be fixed at a rate calculated to meet average administration times.

Fee option 2: Recover a reasonable amount of costs, but not all

This approach requires some general departmental funding and may affect the number of staff that can be brought in as the program expands. **This option is recommended.**

Fee option 3: Charge only a minimal fee.

This approach requires full staffing be funded from general operating budget for the department. Increasing staff as the program expands will be affected.

Fees should be charged for:

1. Pre-application conference
2. Preliminary (concept) review
3. Final review

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Charging a fee for the pre-application conference will elevate its importance. Actual fee calculations should be established following the city's procedures for setting various fee rates.

Enforcement

A key component for success is to be certain that compliance can be enforced. An example is with a potential transparency requirement for storefronts. Even when the requirement is met at the time a Certificate of Occupancy is issued, windows may be blocked up later. How is this monitored and enforced?

Enforcement should be the responsibility of a zoning enforcement officer. Members of the Urban Design Studio should provide support, in terms of helping to confirm potential violations by conducting some site visits. Initial enforcement actions should occur in conjunction with building inspection and the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, when that is required. In general, enforcement of violations will occur in response to citizen complaints.

Application forms

The application forms should be:

1. Dynamic – structured such that an applicant must fill in answers to questions related to compliance with the design guidelines. By asking the applicant to indicate how the guidelines are met by their application, it signals that the guidelines are important and causes the applicant to read them.
2. Submitted on-line
3. Graphically coordinated, such that the program has a distinct identity

Approval process flow chart

[The following text also will be summarized as a flow chart.]

1. Conduct Preliminary Scoping Meeting with staff (no documentation is required).
 - a. Determine that the project is subject to design review.
 - b. Determine if approval will be Administrative or by DRB.
2. Applicant prepares Concept Review application. (This is the equivalent of an architectural "schematic design" level of information.)
 - a. Application form
 - b. Design documents as required
3. Staff conducts Concept Review.
 - a. Staff produces Concept Review Report, with requested refinements to the design.
4. Applicant prepares Final Review application (Design Development level documentation).
 - a. On-line form is submitted
 - i. A checklist is used for the applicant to identify how they have met the guidelines.
 - ii. The application also identifies which changes were made from Concept Review in response to staff comments.
 - b. Design documents are submitted as required.
5. Staff checks the application for completeness.
6. Staff reviews the project and:
 - a. Issues approval, or
 - b. Prepares a staff report for DRB consideration
7. If required, DRB conducts a hearing and issues a decision.
 - a. If approved as submitted, applicant proceeds with other permitting.

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- b. If approved with conditions, applicant executes changes and submits to staff to confirm compliance with conditions.
 - i. If in compliance, the applicant proceeds with other permitting.
- c. If not approved,
 - i. The applicant may revise and re-submit.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Spreadsheets projecting the work load for the Tacoma design review system

This document is in Excel, to facilitate changing variables that may affect the projected work load.

Appendix 2: Survey of the design review workloads in other communities

This is a sampling of communities in which Winter & Company has assisted in establishing design review systems. The information includes the number of projects reviewed annually and the personnel hours required to conduct the reviews. This information is used in estimating the workloads in Appendix 1.

Appendix 3: Summary of on-line research on design review systems of peer communities

This reports findings from a sampling of Western cities that have urban design review systems. The information varies, based on what is available on line. This research informs the strategies in this operations manual. More detailed information is available in the project Drop Box. This includes some sample forms and related administrative tools.

Appendix A:

Explanation of Spread sheets for Tacoma Design Review System work load projections
Draft: July 16, 2019

This document describes the information that is generated on the accompanying spread sheets. The Excel document has 5 tabs. These are organized sequentially, in terms of the information that they provide for determining the work load of the urban Design Review program.

Tab 1: Past permit activity

This data is provided by the City. This serves as the starting point for estimating the number of projects that may be subject to review. Data was provided for about a three-year period. This information is then divided by 3, to provide an average annual count of building permits.

Additional information needed:

1. The data for alterations needs to be broken down into those projects that involve adding onto a building. This data cut may be used in experimenting with alternative review thresholds.
2. Residential construction activity needs to be broken down to separate multifamily permits from single family permits.

Tab 2: Design review thresholds

This table sets up a method of estimating the number of projects that might be subject to review, based on a size threshold. In this draft, a threshold of 5,000 sf is shown as a potential screen for new commercial projects. This is calculated as a percentage of all permit activity, as reported on Tab 1. (The percentage used at this point is a placeholder, pending more detailed information.) The total number of projects subject to review is then further divided into two separate categories, for those projects to be approved by staff and those to be approved by a design review board.

Additional information needed:

1. We need to separate building permit activity into sub-groups, based on building size and footprint, in order to establish percentages that are more realistic.

Tab 3: Projecting staffing requirements (design review tasks only)

This table estimates the hours staff will spend in reviewing projects. It uses the number of projects subject to review that is generated in Tab 2. It further divides these into two categories: (1) Projects in which staff makes the decision, and (2) Projects in which staff assists the DRB in decision-making. (The split is a working estimate.) The number of hours estimated to review a project is based on our research of comparable communities. The total hours required to conduct design review is then compared with the total Full Time Equivalent (FTE) working hours that one staff member would have.

Additional information needed:

1. We need to confirm the total number of working hours (excluding holidays, vacation, etc.) that a staff planner has in a year, in order to calculate the FTE.

2. As the data for Tabs 1 and 2 are updated, the calculations in the Tab will automatically adjust.

Tab 4: Projected staffing requirements (all tasks)

This table estimates the number of professional hours required for all aspects of the Urban Design Review program. It brings forward the design review hours from Tab 3, and then adds hours for other tasks, including Outreach, Developing program tools (e.g. guidelines), Facilitation and General Administration. It then compares the hours required with the total hours for an FTE.

Additional information needed:

1. Review the hourly estimates for tasks other than design review.
2. This sheet will automatically update as information on preceding tabs is updated.

Tab 5: Design Review Board work load projections

This tab estimates the number of hours that will be required for DRB meetings. It uses the number of projects to be reviewed from preceding Tabs and applies an estimate of the number of hours required per project. This is based on research with peer communities. This sheet also estimates the number of hours a board member may put in on other activities other than design review.

Additional information needed:

1. Review the hourly estimates for tasks other than design review.
2. This sheet will automatically update as information on preceding tabs is updated.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Tacoma Building Permit Projection Work Sheet								
2									
3	1. Past permit activity								
4	Update: July 16, 2019								
5									
6									
7	Permit activity from 3/2016 through 6/2019								
8					3 year total	annual average		3 year total	annual average
9					Corridors (120' offset)	Corridors (120' offset)		Neighborhood MUC + DT	Neighborhood MUC + DT
10		Total parcels			6241	2080.33		7026	2342.00
11		Total permits			3850	1283.33		4678	1559.33
12		New commercial			28	9.33		24	8.00
13		Commercial alterations			283	94.33		477	159.00
14		New Residential			34	11.33		11	3.67
15		Residential alterations			154	51.33		63	21.00
16		Site development			67	22.33		32	10.67

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	2. Design Review Thresholds			PHASE ONE						
2	Tacoma Urban Design Review System									
3	Draft: July 16, 2019									
4				Total permits annually (1)	Threshold for review (2)	% projects estimated above threshold (3)	# of Projects above threshold (4)	% of projects that are Staff Decision (5)	# of Staff decision projects (6)	# of DRB Decision projects(7)
5										
6	MIXED USE CENTERS + Downtown									
7			New Commercial & Multifamily	8.00	> 5,000 sf total	100%	8.00	70%	5.60	2.40
8			Commercial & Multifamily Alterations	159.00	> 500 sf increase in footprint or exterior alteration	20%	31.80	80%	25.44	6.36
9										
10	CORRIDORS OUTSIDE OF CENTERS									
11			New Commercial & Multifamily	9.33	> 5,000 sf total	70%	6.53	60%	3.92	2.61
12			Commercial & Multifamily Alterations	94.33	> 500 sf increase in footprint	20%	18.87	80%	15.09	3.77
13										
14			TOTALS	270.67			65.20		50.05	15.15
15										
16	Notes:									
17	1. Data from City; Linked to Tab 1									
18	2. These are preliminary ideas for thresholds.									
19	3. This is an estimate of percentage of projects at the threshold in Column E; Need a more refined data query.									
20	4. Number of projects based on assumed threshold and percentage for staff review.									
21	5. Assumed percentage of projects in Column G that would have staff review.									
22	6. Number of projects for staff review based on assumed percentage.									
23	7. Number of board reviewed projects is the balance, subtracting Column I from Column G									
24										
25			Cells in grey are values derived from a link to Tab 1							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	3. Projecting Staffing Requirements					(Design review tasks only)					
2	Tacoma Urban Design Review System										
3	Draft: July 16, 2019				Annual projections						
4											
5	PHASE 1 PROJECTIONS										
6				Total Projects Reviewed (1)	# Projects for Admin review (2)	Hours per project for Admin reviews (3)	Total hours for Admin review (4)	# Projects for DRB approval (5)	Hour per DRB project for staff (6)	Total hours for DRB admin (7)	Total hours combined (8)
7											
8	MIXED USE CENTERS + DOWNTOWN										
9		A. New Commercial & Multifamily		8.00	5.60	20	112.00	2.40	20	48.00	160.00
10		B. Commercial & Multifamily Alterations		31.80	25.44	16	407.04	6.36	20	127.20	534.24
11		Total MUC + Downtown									694.24
12	CORRIDORS OUTSIDE OF CENTERS										
13		A. New Commercial & Multifamily		6.53	3.92	20	78.40	2.61	20	52.27	130.67
14		B. Commercial & Multifamily Alterations		18.87	15.09	16	241.49	3.77	20	75.47	316.96
15		Total Corridors									447.63
16											
17		GRAND TOTALS		65.20	50.05		838.93	15.15		302.93	1141.87
18											
19	FTE REQUIRED		FTE hrs/Yr		1920						0.59
20											
21	Notes										
22	1. Assumed percentage from Tab 2										
23	2. Assumed percentage from Tab 2										
24	3. Based on research of peer communities										
25	4. Multiple of column E times column F										
26	5. from Tab 2										
27	6. Based on research of peer communities										
28	7. Multiple of column H time column I										
29	8. Sum of column G and J										

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	4. Staffing Projections										
2	Tacoma Urban Design Review System										
3	Draft: July 16, 2019										
4											
5	PROJECTION OF PROFESSIONAL HOURS FOR THE URBAN DESIGN STUDIO PHASE 1										
6											
7	WORK CATEGORY					UNIT	FREQUENCY/ YEAR	HOURS/ UNIT	TOTAL HRS.	Hours/ Category	% / Category
8											
9	OUTREACH										
10		Public presentations (1)				1	6	24	144.00		
11		Web site materials (2)				1	4	16	64.00		
12		Conferences & training (3)				1	2	24	48.00	256.00	10%
13											
14	DEVELOPING TOOLS										
15		Design guidelines (4)				1	1	80	80.00		
16		Educational materials (5)				1	4	40	160.00		
17		Administrative forms (6)				1	4	24	96.00	336.00	13%
18											
19	FACILITATION										
20		Technical assistance (7)				1	30	4	120.00		
21		Coordination with other permitting (8)				1	60	2	120.00	240.00	9%
22											
23	DECISION-MAKING (DESIGN REVIEW)										
24		Informational meetings with potential applicants (9)				1	150	1	150.00		
25		Reviewing MUC+DT Projects (10 & 11)				1			694.24		
26		Reviewing Corridors (10 & 11)				1			447.63		
27		Responding to general inquiries (12)				1	100	0.5	50.00		
28		Inspections to confirm compliance (13)				1	80	2	160.00	1501.87	57%
29											
30	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION										
31		General administration (14)				1	50	4	200.00		
32		Annual report (15)				1	1	80	80.00	280.00	11%
33											
34											
35	TOTAL HOURS, ALL PROFESSIONALS										
36											
37		1 FTE ANNUAL HOURS								1920	
38		TOTAL FTE PROFESSIONALS RE									1.36

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
39											
40	NOTES										
41		1. Preparing for and attending presentations to civic groups, etc.									
42		2. Preparing informational materials for department web manager									
43		3. Attending conferences related to urban design and design review									
44		4. Coordinating with consultants and developing supplementary guidance materials as needed									
45		5. Developing brochures, etc. for the general public									
46		6. Preparing and updating application forms, etc.									
47		7. Providing advice on site prior to formal application									
48		8. Assisting with other reviews, adaptive reuse, etc.									
49		9. Advising at preapplication meetings about potential projects									
50		10. Conducting formal review of applications, ruling and writing findings									
51		11. Conducting formal review of applications, writing recommendations, and attending DRB meetings									
52		12. Meetings and calls not formally associated with an application									
53		13. On-site inspection visits (a supplement to code enforcement officials)									
54		14. Internal reporting, staff meetings, etc.									
55		15. Preparing formal annual report on studio performance									

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	5. Design Review Board Work Load Projections									
2	Tacoma Urban Design Review Program									
3	Draft: July 16, 2019									
4										
5	PROJECTION OF BOARD MEMBER HOURS				YEAR 1					
6										
7	WORK CATEGORY				UNIT	# / YEAR	HOURS / UNIT	TOTAL HRS.		
8	OUTREACH									
9		Conferences & training (1)			1	1	16	16		
10										
11	DEVELOPING TOOLS									
12		Design guidelines updates (2)			1	1	16	16		
13										
14	FACILITATION									
15		Technical assistance			0	0	0	0		
16		Coordination with other permiiting			0	0	0	0		
17										
18	DECISION-MAKING (DESIGN REVIEW)									
19		Hearing appeals of staff decisions (3)			1	7	1	7		
20		Hearing major projects (4)			1	15	3	45		
21		Advising applicants			0	0	0	0		
22		Inspections			0	0	0	0		
23										
24	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION									
25		General administration			0	0	0	0		
26		Annual report (5)			1	1	8	8		
27										
28	TOTAL HOURS, FOR ONE BOARD MEMBER									
29										
30		Total hearing hours (6)			52					
31		Total meetings per year (7)			22					
32		Total hours per meeting (8)			2.36					
33										
34	NOTES									
35		1. All members participating in local/regional conference or in-house training								
36		2. Reviewing drafts and providing comments								
37		3. Hearing appeals and staff requests for advice on administrative reviews (10% of staff reviews)								
38		4. Includes concept and final review meetings								

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
39		5. Review and comment on annual report									
40		6. Board meeting hours on agenda items only									
41		7. DRB meets twice monthly, except once monthly in Nov and Dec									
42		8. Average length of DRB meeting with projected agenda load									

Appendix B:

Explanation of responses from emailed communities

Draft: July 16, 2019

The accompanying spread sheet contains information collected from some of our former clients in an informal survey about their experience with operational aspects of design review.

Questions asked appear at the top of the chart, followed by responses from the different communities. The questions apply to all projects subject to design review, city-wide, or to all special review districts, but excluding the historic preservation program.

Responses from Emailed Communities - Appendix B
16-Jul-19

	How many projects have gone through design review during the past year? Is that a typical volume for recent years?	What is the general distribution of those reviewed by project type? (Commercial, mixed use, multi-family, etc. This may be a number for each category, or a percentage.)	Of all projects that came through design review, approximately how many ultimately received approval? (This may be actual number, or a percentage.)	Typically, how many steps does a project go through? (e.g. Informal consultation, Preliminary review, Final review)	How much staff time is involved at each of those steps for a typical project review? (include time consulting with the applicant, writing reports and attending meetings, etc.)	What is the average length of time that a project takes, from the first formal application for review to its gaining an approval?	How is compliance monitored? (e. g. by a zoning inspector, building inspector)	Approximately how much time goes into monitoring compliance for an individual project?
Arvada, CO	133 projects	Agriculture - 1%; Civic - 2%; Commercial - 50%; Mixed-use - 5%; Multi-family - 12%; Office - 3%; Single Family - 18%	46% approved	In straight zoning districts, one step. In PUDs, two steps. All require an informal pre-application meeting.	This is something we haven't tracked yet	Administrative cases, generally 12-16 weeks; Public Hearing cases, generally 24 weeks	Certificate of Occupancy inspections - completed by building inspectors, planners, engineers	We have not tracked this yet.
Chapel Hill, NC	2 large redevelopment projects; 5 façade renovations/modifications (Blue Hill District projects only - special review district)	Redevelopment projects - 1 residential, 1 mixed use; Façade projects - 4 commercial, 1 residential	All projects received approval or approval with conditions.	Design review largely happens at Community Design Commission hearings. There may be some informal consultation with staff for larger projects. Between 1 and 4 CDC meetings are typically needed for review, depending on the scale of improvements. For new buildings/building additions, staff also reviews projects for Building Form and Mass requirements. This happens concurrent with or subsequent to CDC review.	0-1 hours consulting with applicant, pre-application; 1-3 hours reviewing applications for completeness, preparing reports and agenda items, writing approval letters; 2-5 hours staff review of applications (for new buildings/additions only, time needed for Building Form and Mass requirements); 0.5-8 hours CDC meeting time on project (split over multiple meetings for larger projects)	Redevelopment projects - 3-6 month CDC review, 4-6 months staff review - may be concurrent or sequential; Façade projects - 1-2 months CDC review only	Planning staff do a zoning inspection for design-related items, prior to CO	Staff spends a few hours on a site visit towards the end of construction, with possibly a second site visit if there are items to correct. We are considering whether it would be effective to do some interim compliance checks during construction, so we're not waiting till the CO stage to identify issues.
Farragut, TN	8 projects reviewed for compliance with the Architectural Design Standards during the past 12 months. We generally have between 5-15 projects per year that would warrant an ADS review.	During this review cycle there were 7 commercial projects and 1 office project.	Each project received approval, though each project made adjustments to comply with the ADS which ended up improving the appearance of both the building and the site.	Pre-submittal meeting with staff, review of initial plans by staff, review of staff comments with applicant, revisions to initial plans, review of revised plans, recommendations to the Planning Commission, and action taken by the Planning Commission	"Typical" staff time is perhaps 6-8 hours per primary staff person. Some projects will be less and some much more.	Typically 1 month	Periodic and final site and building inspections by codes, planning and engineering staff.	From a planning perspective, less than 2-3 hours. This is a very rough estimate however and varies depending on the project and contractor.
Missoula, MT	4 projects that have at least started going through Design Excellence Review (DER), 1 of which was approved and is waiting on building permit review. There have also been 4 projects that were in our Design Excellence overlay but only required meeting zoning standards, not guidelines.	Of the 4 projects under DER, 3 were commercial (2 hotels, 1 retail) and one was multi-family (micro-apartments!). The 4 that did not go through design excellence review were all commercial buildings.	Out of 4 projects under DER, 1 project has received approval (a new hotel). At this point, it seems likely that the other three will be fine, although one of them, a renovation in the downtown (of the Days Inn hotel), may end up being referred to the Design Review Board for approval.	So far, all of our DER's have started with pre-application/informal consultation. Our submittals have been fairly loose as far as what constitutes a preliminary vs. formal submittal. We also are struggling with how to address guidelines that apply to elements of a design that will come up later during the building permit process (i.e. bike parking or street furniture). Our approach has been to re-open the initial DER during time of building permit to evaluate those guidelines that weren't applicable in the preliminary application.	A lot of staff time is devoted to DER's. We have not been able to establish one staff person as the main reviewer, and many people have been involved in the review process. Most time-consuming is that we've not developed a straightforward process for making determinations on what meets the guidelines or not. Also, generating responses to applicants that are acceptable to everyone involved can take time. However, writing a final approval letter and/or report writing takes relatively little time because none of the DER applications we've had so far have gone to an actual Design Review Board.	The way that we've been approaching the steps to a DER is that it is basically preliminary until a final design is approved and then it's processed as a final application. The majority of time is spent during the preliminary phase. Once we receive plans, the actual review time is usually just a week or two, but there has been quite a bit more time spent communicating about design expectations and waiting for plan revisions.	We haven't really gotten this far, as none of our DER projects have gotten to actual construction yet. But most likely, our compliance staff who do final zoning compliance checks for any other building permits will be doing so for design excellence projects as well, and they will include the planner who reviewed the project in their inspections.	It's hard to say for us at this point since we are so early in implementing this.
Monterey, CA	102 - yes a typical volume	Commercial: 46; Residential: 56	99%	One if administrative, two if it goes to the Architectural Review Committee, but more often than not, both preliminary and final review occur in one meeting	3-5 hours if administrative; 6-10 if it goes to the ARC	Three months, if the applicant resubmits any missing information from the initial application in a timely manner	Through building plan check, then final inspection by the planner	2-3 hours
Rosswell, GA	34 projects reviewed by Design Review Board. (Note: Projects go before the Board sometimes twice between initial and final approval. Therefore, there is some overlapping and duplication. About 75% of DRB items are heard twice. Board informally weighs in on rezoning/conditional use permit applications and code text amendments.) There is also, a minor approval process, where staff approve projects administratively. There were 31 projects in 2018.	Commercial - 18%; Mixed Use - 5%; Multi-family - 1%; Townhouse - 6%; Others -4%	Approximately 95 to 98% approval. There are not a lot of speculative projects	Assuming there is not a rezoning or use permit involved, the typical review process is as follows: (1) Pre-application meeting; (2) Application submittal, at which time review for completion - incomplete applications not accepted; (3) Staff Report for Initial Review; (4) Initial review at DRB meeting; (5) Staff Report Completed for Final Review; and (6) Final Review - DRB meeting	Anywhere from 5 to 20 hours or more depending on the complexity of the project. Work Session meetings (average 2 a month) are not required. Minor reviews average 1-2 hours per review	Average 90 days from application submittal to final approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pre-application meeting is required prior to Land Disturbance Permit (LDP) and/or building permit, which allows the planners to discuss with applicant the conditions and design guidelines. Planners review construction drawings and sign off on the LDP and/or building permit applications for compliance The inspectors work closely with the planners throughout the construction process. Planners perform field inspections as the construction occurs and complete a final inspection. 	<p>Anywhere from 2 to 40 hours depending on the complexity of the project. Best estimate is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planners visit site at least 2- 3 times Inspectors (engineering and building) visit at least 3 to 4 times. Very difficult to quantify.

Tacoma Operations Manual Appendix C: Design Review Systems in Other Communities

Design review systems – their processes, review projects, review procedures and fees – vary throughout the country. This report summarizes a range of options for a design review program, based on information collected from the websites of a variety of communities. Note that each community had varying degrees of information online; therefore, while 13 communities were initially the subject of this research, ultimately, this report summarizes the ten communities with the most information to help create a complete picture of design review. The communities surveyed range in population from 142,647 to 647,805 people and are between 22.98 and 183.94 square miles. The communities included in the analysis below are:

- Boise, ID
- Fort Collins, CO
- Glendale, AZ
- Pasadena, CA
- Portland, OR
- Sacramento, CA
- Salt Lake City, UT
- Scottsdale, AZ
- Spokane, WA
- Tempe, AZ

Scope of Review

While each of the reviewed communities includes some type of design review, the number and reviewed project types differ. The majority of the communities require design review for commercial, multifamily, office, industrial and public projects. Other project types - such as residential, site design, change of use, parking, and public art placement - require design review only in some communities.

Thresholds

In some cases, size thresholds are used to determine which projects require design review. For instance, in Glendale, AZ, remodels that alter 20% of an existing site or building, or remodels valued at 50% or more of the existing improvement on the site require design review. In Pasadena, CA, thresholds include multifamily development of three or more units, and any new building over 5,000 square feet in size. In yet another approach, Spokane, WA requires design review for projects within certain zones such as downtown zones and Centers & Corridor zones, and within each zone a threshold is set using square footage, or the percentage of visible building façade that is changed.

Staffing

The design review process in every community includes numerous steps, but most often begins with the assignment of a staff person to review the application. In some communities, the staff person receives the project and takes it all the way through design review, while in others, the staff person acts as a contact and passes the project to the appropriate review body. For instance, in Boise, ID, staff can review new residential buildings of 6 or less units, small office, commercial or industrial buildings and minor alterations to existing buildings, among other

projects. The number of planning staff differs for each community, but in general ranges from 3 – 27 people total, with 3 and 4 people designated to design review, for the communities that provided this information online.

Design Review Process

For larger, more complicated projects that are required to be reviewed by a design review board or committee, a “pre-application” meeting is typically provided as a free city service, and is usually optional, albeit recommended. Where a pre-application meeting is charged, it typically is treated as a “deposit” that then applies to the subsequent design review fee, or is forfeited if the project does not move forward. For example, Portland, OR provides the opportunity for a Design Advice Request (DAR) meeting with the Design Commission prior to submitting a full application for the types of projects that will be reviewed by the group.

Design Review Board

Each of the researched communities has one design review board, rather than separate boards for specific locations or types of projects. For those communities that provided information about the required composition of the board members, a range of professionals were represented including architects, engineers, developers, arts commissioners, realtors, urban designers and land use lawyers. Required review by a specific design review-focused board is often completed during a public hearing. Other unique meetings may be required, such as a neighborhood meeting in the City of Fort Collins, CO to explain the proposed project and answer any questions the community may have.

Design Guidelines

In addition to adopting specific design review processes for submitted proposals, each of the researched communities also adopted at least one set of design review criteria, most often a set of design guidelines or standards. The majority of the communities adopted guidelines or principles that apply citywide, and may address a specific topic such as single-family residential design principles. The majority of the communities also had at least one document that was specific to a certain geographical area, including downtown, specific corridors or defined neighborhoods. In addition to adopting separate documents to aid in design review, a few of the communities also included standards in their development code or ordinances.

Design Review Fees

Each of the communities included in this research charged a fee for design review. Specific fees for a separate list of communities (with some overlap in the previously researched communities) ranged based on project type and size. Often a base fee was charged for design review and the amount increased based on staff or administrative review, as well as the size or type of project. For instance, Boise charges a \$530 base fee and the price increases by \$15/residential unit or \$15/1,000 square feet of gross floor area. Pasadena also charges based on the number of residential units and staff or commission review, but also charges for each meeting and phase,

such as concept review vs. final design review. The fee schedule in Pasadena is also dependent on the project type, resulting in a design review fee that ranges from \$400 for minor projects such as signs, awnings and paint colors to \$20,000+ for large projects. To aid applicants, some communities, such as Fort Collins, provide downloadable Excel sheets that an applicant can use to estimate the associated project and design review fees.

(for discussion purposes)

DRAFT TACOMA URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following draft Design Principles will apply universally to the downtown, mixed-use center and pedestrian corridors zone classifications. Specific design standards and guidelines will be developed for each character district.

Connectivity

Tacoma downtown, mixed use center and pedestrian corridors aspires to raise the quality of life for its community members by providing a highly functional and legible [access and mobility network](#).

New developments are an integral part of the community with seamless connections through public transit and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure systems. A logical pattern of small blocks, streets, alleyways and urban pathways provide direct pedestrian and bike connections, making a 20-minute walk experience safe and enjoyable.

Healthy Community

The urban form and public realm embrace a healthy lifestyle, in part due to its proximity to a mix of uses and walkable neighborhood corridors in each district. Land uses, built structures and open spaces embrace a human scale and [walkable community](#) design ethic. Tree-lined corridors, waterfronts and parks and open spaces provide safe places to sit, enjoy and engage with others. Built structures are designed around health and wellness design principles, built to last, with future generations in mind.

Sustainable Design

Designers, builders and developers consistently demonstrate integrated design solutions aimed at [long-term, sustained best practices](#), taking into account sustainable site metrics, ecological and environmental stewardship, social equity, indoor health and economic development measures. Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design (LEED-ND) standards Fitwell and other equivalent and universally accepted programs are applied as a baseline to ensure uniformed and high-quality development thresholds are consistently applied throughout the community.

Distinctive Character

Each district is recognized for its [unique character, historic and cultural values](#). Transit-supportive design principles support a variety of places to live, work and shop. The mix of uses embraces creative, flexible spaces, local businesses and active street-level retail experiences, balanced with ground-level residential and live work. Built structures are diverse with no overt repetition in building form. Individual structures, blocks and streets vary in scale, form, massing and character. Finish building materials and colors are consciously selected to express individuality in buildings and a richness that is distinctive of each character district.

Cultural Heritage

The city of Tacoma is defined by its rich history and culture. Important community resources that define the present and past are representative of the values and placemaking attributes of the community. Protection and conservation of key resources is fundamental to the communities desire to look to the future.

Adaptability

The Tacoma downtown, mixed-use centers and pedestrian corridors will evolve over time. Development initiatives and design outcomes should respond accordingly to reflect progressive values and distinctive character and styles over time. [Flexibility in uses](#), building materials and construction practices contribute to the eclectic design objectives of Tacoma and help set this community apart from other locations in the region.

Creativity

Tacoma is a community supportive of its [arts and cultural foundations](#). Residents, workers and students of all ages, cultures, and interests engage in innovative ideas and problem solving, embracing a diverse and creative population. Active streets emulate a diversity of uses, storefronts, creative workspaces and expressions of art incorporated into public and private spaces reinforces and anchors the community, its neighborhoods and the unique geography and context of Tacoma.

Variety

A mix of housing typologies, workplaces and business choices permeate each character district. Zoning and design standards encourage a [diversity of architectural typologies](#) intended to accommodate; a variety of housing types (flats, townhouses, live-work units, micro-units, etc.), affordability levels, and diversity of workspaces, retail and restaurant options as well as accommodating needed local services such as daycare, creative workspaces and goods.

Accessibility

Tacoma is [welcoming and family-friendly](#). Built urban forms and public spaces (streets, parks, natural open spaces and waterfronts) provide universal accessibility to people of all ages, abilities, and interests, particularly for those with restricted mobility or abilities.

City of Tacoma Urban Design Guidelines

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To: Planning Commission
From: Lihuang Wung, Planning Services Division
Subject: **Planning Commission Rules and Regulations (“Bylaws”)**
Meeting Date: August 7, 2019
Memo Date: July 31, 2019

Action Requested:
Review and Approval of Amendments.

Discussion:

At the next meeting on August 7, 2019, the Planning Commission will review its Bylaws and consider amendments, as appropriate. It has been the practice of the Commission to review the Bylaws on a periodic basis and seek opportunities for continuous improvement to the Commission’s operations. The Bylaws were last amended in August 2018. Based on comments and input from various Commissioners over the past year, staff suggests that it is opportune time to review the Bylaws again and that the following potential issues may be considered for amendments:

1. The timing for the nominations and elections of Chair and Vice-Chair (Bylaws, Section I.B.)
2. The meeting location that has been changed to Council Chambers (Section IV.A.)
3. The potential need for allowing “telephonic participation in meetings” (Section IV)
4. The implementation and impacts of the “Absences” provision (Section IV.E.)
5. The implementation and impacts of the “Public Comment” provision (Section IV.G.1.d)
6. Other additional issues

Attached is a tracked-change version of the Bylaws reflecting some of the above-mentioned issues. Note that the proposed amendment concerning the issue of “telephonic participation in meetings” is the same proposal that was first brought up on August 5, 2015, but did not receive the approval from the Commission, for the following reason:

“Section IV-E: Provision to allow telephonic participation in meetings. Mr. Wung noted that they would only allow one Commissioner to phone in to each meeting; it would only be available for locations that could accommodate it; and telephonic participation would count as quorum. Commissioners expressed concern about not being able to ensure that a caller is attentive and engaged; that it was important that Commissioners be present for public hearings; and that telephonic participation should not be encouraged. Commissioners suggested that it is not necessary for telephonic participation be explicitly included in the Bylaws but be accommodated when needed and on a case by case basis.” (Excerpt from the minutes of August 5, 2015)

Prior Actions:

The Bylaws went through the following recent amendments:

- August 1, 2018 – Adding the “Absences” provision (Section IV.E)
- December 6, 2017 – Changing the meeting starting time from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- June 1, 2016 – Changing the timing of the nominations and elections of Chair and Vice-Chair from June to September
- August 5, 2015 – Adding “Public Comment” to agendas (Section IV.G.1), adding “telephonic participation in meetings” (not approved), and making various clean-ups.



Planning Commission
Planning Commission Bylaws
July 31, 2019
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Staff Contact:

Lihuang Wung, Senior Planner, (253) 591-5682, lwung@cityoftacoma.org

Attachments:

- A. Planning Commission's Rules and Regulations (proposed amendments, August 7, 2019)

c: Peter Huffman, Director



TACOMA PLANNING COMMISSION

RULES AND REGULATIONS ("BY-LAWS")

The following Rules and Regulations of the Tacoma Planning Commission were originally adopted by the Commission on July 6, 1954, and subsequently amended on January 29, 1964; April 20, 1970, July 21, 1980; September 4, 1991; August 16, 1993; August 21, 1995; May 21, 1997; June 7, 2000; October 20, 2004; November 18, 2009; December 1, 2010; August 5, 2015; June 1, 2016; December 6, 2017; ~~and~~ August 1, 2018; and August 7, 2019. These Rules and Regulations conform to the statutory authority of the City Charter (Article III, Section 3.8 – City Planning Commission) and the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) (Title 13, Chapter 13.02 – Planning Commission).

The Rules and Regulations contain the following sections:

- I. Officers
- II. Advisory Committees and Task Forces
- III. Staffing
- IV. Meetings
- V. Records
- VI. Annual Report
- VII. Miscellaneous
- VIII. Rules and Regulations Amendments

I. Officers

- A. The Commission shall elect its own Chair, Vice-Chair, and such other officers as from time to time it may determine it requires, all of whom shall be members of the Commission.
- B. Nominations and elections of officers shall be conducted at the first meeting in September of each year or on a different date set by the Commission. New officers will assume duties after the meeting following their election.
- C. Officer Qualification Considerations – The Officers should be interested in holding the position(s); be able to devote sufficient time to Commission business and attend as many Commission meetings as possible; be prepared to make presentations to the City Council, citizens, committees, neighborhood groups, and service clubs regarding Commission responsibilities, projects, plans and policies; and have sufficient experience on the Commission to understand its role and functions and to have a basic understanding of the City's Comprehensive Plan policies and development regulations.
- D. The term of office shall be for one (1) year or until the next scheduled election. In case of any vacancy in office, the vacancy shall be filled by an election at the first regular meeting after the occurrence of such vacancy.

- E. Duties of Officers – The Chair shall preside over all meetings of the Commission. All resolutions adopted by the Commission and Commission correspondence shall be signed in his/her name as Chair of the Commission. In the event of the absence of the Chair or his/her inability to act, the Vice-Chair shall take his/her place and perform his/her duties. In the event of the absences or inability to act of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the remaining members of the Commission shall appoint one of their members to temporarily act as Chair.

II. Advisory Committees and Task Forces

- A. Advisory Committees – The Commission may establish advisory committees as it deems appropriate, following the procedures set forth in TMC 13.02.015.
- B. Task Forces – The Commission may also establish task forces as it deems appropriate to conduct extended and supplemental analyses of issues identified and defined by the Commission. Task forces are ad-hoc and issue-oriented in nature and shall not be construed to have the same organization and operation as those of “advisory committees.” A task force shall be comprised of up to four (4) members of the Commission designated by the Commission by a majority vote. Chairpersons of task forces may be designated by the Chair of the Commission. There shall not be more than two task forces operating at any given time. Task forces shall serve at the discretion of the Commission and their duties and responsibilities shall be established by the Commission. All task force meetings shall be open to the public and conducted in accordance with these rules. Task forces may not conduct public hearings.

III. Staffing

The Long-Range Planning Division Manager and/or his/her designee (hereinafter referred to as Staff) shall organize and supervise clerical details of the Commission's business and shall be responsible to the Commission for the proper preparation and maintenance of records of meetings, hearings, official actions and all public records. Staff shall be responsible for providing such other services as may be required by the Commission within the limits of the budget for the Planning and Development Services Department as approved by the City Council.

IV. Meetings

- A. Regular Meetings – Regular public meetings of the Commission shall be held on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in ~~Room 16~~ [the Council Chambers](#) of the Tacoma Municipal Building ~~North~~, or in another location designated by the Commission. If the regular meeting day falls on a legal holiday, the Chair of the Commission shall fix another day therefore and give notice of said meeting as hereinafter providing for “special meetings.” The notice for any regular public meeting shall indicate the date, time, place and business to be transacted, and be distributed prior to the meeting to those individuals and organizations listed on the mailing list that shall be maintained by Staff and may be subject to the Commission’s approval.
- B. Public Hearings – Public hearings conducted by the Commission shall be held in the Council Chambers of the Tacoma Municipal Building or another location designated by the Commission and indicated in the notice of hearing. The date and time of the hearing shall be determined by the Commission and indicated on the notice of hearing.

Notices for public hearings shall be distributed in accordance with TMC 13.02.057. Notices shall also be mailed, prior to the hearing, to those on the mailing list as hereinabove provided, to those individuals or organizations which have indicated in writing to the Planning and Development Services Department an interest in the subject(s) of the hearing, and to other interested parties as deemed appropriate by the Commission. An additional notice shall be required for matters continued for further hearing and continued to a time, date, and place certain.

- C. Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Commission set for a time different than regularly scheduled as hereinabove provided shall be held at such times as the Commission may determine, or may be called by the Chair for any time upon the written request of three members of the Commission. Special meetings shall be open to the public. Per RCW 42.30.080, special meetings require at least 24 hours' written notice. Such notice shall indicate the date, time, place and business to be transacted. Notices of special meetings shall be distributed to the same recipients of notices for regular public meetings, to the recipients on the special press mailing list on file with the City Clerk's Office, and to other interested parties as deemed appropriate by the Commission.
- D. Quorum – A quorum for the transaction of official business shall consist of a simple majority of appointed, filled positions of the Commission, per TMC 13.02.041.

E. Telephonic Participation in Meetings – Members of the Commission may attend meetings by telephone, with a limit of one Commissioner per meeting. Notice of telephonic attendance must be provided to Staff not less than forty-eight hours before the scheduled start time for the meeting. If more than one Commissioner wishes to attend a meeting telephonically, the first Commissioner to notify Staff shall be the one permitted to do so. There shall be a telephone device that enables the remote participant and all persons present at the meeting location to be clearly audible to one another. The remote participant shall be considered to be actually present at the meeting for the period of time he/she is so connected to the telephone line, and that presence shall count toward a quorum of the Commission for all purposes.

E.F. Absences – Members are expected to attend Commission meetings and to fully participate in and contribute to the work of the Commission. Any member anticipating absence from a meeting should notify the Chair or Staff in advance, so that the absence may be excused by the Commission at the meeting. Any member who is absent from three consecutive meetings without being excused or six meetings in a calendar year, whether excused or unexcused, should be deemed to have forfeited the office and the Chair should recommend to the City Council that a new member be appointed to fill the unexpired term. When a member misses three meetings within a six-month period, the Chair should discuss with the member the implications of their lack of attendance and options for improvement. If the circumstances are expected to continue unimproved, the member may be asked to consider resigning from the Commission before reaching the above mentioned threshold of absences.

F.G. Every official act taken by the Commission shall be by resolution or by motion by an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum. In the event that a member disqualifies themselves or passes, this is to be registered as "not voting". Notwithstanding Robert's Rules of Order, the Chair shall vote on all resolutions or motions.

G.H. Conduct of Meetings

1. Order of Business – The following order of business may be modified for any meeting by a suspension of the rules, concurred in by a majority of the voting members present, except that consideration of matters set for public hearing must occur at or following the time indicated on the hearing notice:
 - a) Call to Order and Quorum Call
 - b) Approval of Agenda
 - c) Approval of Minutes
 - d) Public Comment – The Chair shall decide whether this item will be included in the agenda, and if so, how much time will be allowed for each speaker. Public comments, if included in the agenda, must be limited to items on the agenda that are not the topic of a recent public hearing.
 - e) Discussion Items – Matters set for public hearing shall be considered at such time as determined by the Commission and set forth in the hearing notice.
 - f) Communication – This may include other business brought forward by Commissioners, comments by Commissioners, and comments and additional information provided by Staff.
 - g) Adjournment
2. Conduct of Regular and Special Meetings:
 - a) The Chair shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the Commission.
 - b) The Chair introduces the agenda items.
 - c) Staff and/or presenters invited by staff summarize the information prepared or received by the staff responsible for the agenda item.
 - d) The Commission considers requests and may ask questions of the staff and/or other presenters. Comments by the public on the agenda item under consideration may be permitted, but only at the discretion of the Chair.
 - e) The Chair asks for reports from advisory committees or task forces, if appropriate.
 - f) The Commission takes appropriate action, if an action is required.
3. Conduct of Public Hearings:
 - a) The Chair shall preside over all public hearings conducted by the Commission.
 - b) The Chair calls the public hearing to order and announces the procedure for the public hearing as established by the Commission.
 - c) Staff summarizes the staff report or other information prepared or received by the staff responsible for the hearing item.
 - d) The Chair asks for reports from advisory committees or task forces, if appropriate.
 - e) The Commission receives oral testimony.

- f) The Chair either closes the hearing and announces the date upon which the record of the hearing will remain open to receive additional written comments, or continues the hearing to a later date if there is a finding by the Chair that all interested parties have not been afforded an adequate opportunity to testify before the Commission or if new information is to be considered on which the Commission feels additional public testimony to be appropriate.
- g) At a meeting(s) subsequent to the public hearing, the Commission considers all oral and written testimony concerning the hearing item and acts to approve, disapprove, modify, or defer the decision-making until the completion of additional analyses.

H.I. Open Public Meetings Act and E-mail Exchanges

E-mail exchanges between members of the Commission can constitute a violation of the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), Chapter 42.30 RCW. Generally, if a majority of the members participate in an e-mail discussion of Commission business, the members are conducting a meeting in violation of the OPMA requirement that meetings must be “open to the public with prior notice.” It is suggested that Commission members observe the following guidelines to avoid OPMA problems with e-mail exchanges:

1. When possible, limit e-mail exchanges on issues related to Commission business to less than a majority of Commission members. Sending copies of an e-mail to less than a majority may not suffice if subsequent exchanges relay the content of the original exchange to a majority of members.
2. Never decide at an open meeting that a majority of the Commission will continue or complete discussion of an agenda item by e-mail.
3. One-sided (no response anticipated) informational e-mails to a majority or more of Commission members are probably consistent with the OPMA. In open meetings, the Commission members should verbally announce that they have sent this type of e-mail if it relates to the discussion at hand. Commission members are free to engage in e-mail exchanges with staff on one-sided e-mails, but not with each other.
4. E-mail exchanges on issues that the Commission will not address are consistent with the OPMA. However, if any reasonable chance exists that an issue relates to a vote that may or will come before the Commission, a majority of the Commission should not subject the issue to e-mail discussion.

V. Records

- A. The Commission's adopted summary minutes of the public meetings shall be the official records. The actual recording of each hearing item shall be the official record for such item.
- B. Supplemental records pertaining to matters of public meetings and public hearings shall be kept on file in the Planning and Development Services Department as required by law. These supplemental records may include but not be limited to the following:
 1. Description of agenda items, including all submitted information therewith.

2. Report of the Planning and Development Services Department, Commission Advisory Committees and Task Forces on the matter as presented to the Commission at a meeting thereof, including such material submitted in writing and in map form.
 3. Written communications concerning the matter.
 4. Facts concerning the matter.
 5. Records of all actions taken by the Commission in the matter (resolutions, motions, setting of dates for hearings, etc.).
 6. Record of actions taken by the City Council in the matter (ordinances, resolutions, results of hearings, etc.).
- C. Recorded transcripts or summary minutes of all official Commission proceedings shall be filed with the City Clerk and shall be opened to public inspection.

VI. Annual Report

Pursuant to TMC 13.02.040, the Commission shall annually report to the City Council regarding accomplishments and the status of planning efforts undertaken in the previous year, and if applicable, the outlook of planning issues for the coming year. Said report is typically prepared in July of each year and should, at the discretion of the Chair, take the form of a letter, a memorandum, a summary report or a copy of relevant minutes of the Commission's meetings, and may be posted on the City's website.

VII. Miscellaneous

- A. Code of Ethics – Members of the Commission shall comply with the City of Tacoma's Code of Ethics pursuant to TMC 1.46 while conducting Commission business.
- B. Disclosure of Contacts – Individual members of the Commission may, but are not required to, participate in or initiate discussions with interested parties affected by issues under consideration by the Commission. Such meetings or contacts with citizens should be disclosed at the next scheduled meeting of the Commission. The intent of such disclosures in a public setting is to preserve the integrity of the Commission's process and provide a record and notice to other individuals who may also be affected or interested. If a Commissioner receives a request to meet/discuss but prefers not to do so, he/she may suggest the requesting parties to express their comments and concerns through the normal procedures, i.e., providing testimony at public hearings and/or providing comments to staff.
- C. Contact Information – The contact information of members of the Commission should be considered public information and made available for public access upon request.
- D. Conferences – Members of the Commission may attend, at their own expense, conferences, meetings and training courses closely related to Commission business.

VIII. Rules and Regulations Amendments

The Rules and Regulations may be amended by the Commission by a majority of vote at any meeting.