

## AGENDA

**MEETING:** Regular Meeting (Hybrid)  
**DATE/TIME:** Wednesday, January 18, 2023, 5:00 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** Council Chambers  
1st Floor of the Tacoma Municipal Building  
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402  
**ZOOM INFO:** Link: <https://www.zoom.us/j/81358095104>  
Dial-in: +1 253 215 8782  
ID: 813 5809 5104

### **A. Call to Order**

- Quorum Call
- Land Acknowledgement

### **B. Approval of Agenda**

### **C. Approval of Minutes**

- August 3, 2022

### **D. Public Comments**

- Written comments on Discussion Items are accepted via e-mail and must be submitted by 12:00 noon on the meeting day; e-mail to [planning@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:planning@cityoftacoma.org).

### **E. Disclosure of Contacts**

### **F. Discussion Items**

#### **1. Planning Commission Work Program Update and By-laws Review**

- Description: A mid-cycle check-in and review of the Commission's Work Program for 2022-2024; Consider amending the Planning Commission Rules & Regulations ("By-laws").
- Action: Informational.
- Staff Contact: Brian Boudet ([BBoudet@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:BBoudet@cityoftacoma.org))

#### **2. 2024 GMA Update**

- Description: An introduction to the upcoming update to the One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan, including a general timeline, phases, and scope considerations.
- Action: Informational.
- Staff Contact: Stephen Atkinson ([SAtkinson@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:SAtkinson@cityoftacoma.org))



### 3. Urban Design Review Program

- Description: Review findings from the follow-up survey soliciting Commissioner input on program elements that were previously presented at the December 7, 2022, Planning Commission meeting, and provide feedback in anticipation of a Spring 2023 release of the full Program proposal for Public Review.
- Action: Comment and Direction.
- Staff Contact: Stephen Antupit ([WRhodes@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:WRhodes@cityoftacoma.org)); Carl Metz ([CMetz@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:CMetz@cityoftacoma.org))

### 4. Pacific Avenue Corridor Subarea Plan & EIS (“Picture Pac Ave”) – Workshop

- Description: An interactive workshop with activities designed to elicit feedback and direction on key project goals and priorities.
- Action: Comment and Direction.
- Staff Contact: Wesley Rhodes ([WRhodes@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:WRhodes@cityoftacoma.org))

## G. Upcoming Meetings (Tentative Agendas)

#### (1) February 1, 2023 (Hybrid)

- 2023 Amendment – Electric Fences
- 2023 Amendment – Shipping Containers
- 2023 Amendment – Mor Furniture
- Neighborhood Planning Program – McKinley Neighborhood Plan
- Home In Tacoma Phase 2

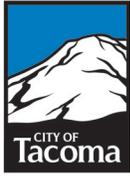
#### (2) February 15, 2023 (Hybrid)

- 2023 Amendment - Delivery-Only Businesses
- 2023 Amendment - Commercial Zoning Update
- 2023 Amendment – Minor Plan and Code Amendments
- Urban Design Review Program

## H. Communication Items

- (1) **City Manager's Recommendation to Council** – Status and Future of the Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG)
- (2) **Status Reports by Commissioners** – Housing Equity Taskforce.
- (3) **IPS Agenda** – The Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee’s next hybrid meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.; the agenda (tentatively) includes presentations on Home In Tacoma Phase 2 and the 2023 Annual Amendment. (Held at 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402, Conference Room 248 or virtually at <http://www.zoom.us/j/87829056704>, passcode 614650)

## I. Adjournment



## **MINUTES (draft)**

**MEETING:** Regular Meeting (virtual)

**DATE/TIME:** Wednesday, August 3, 2022, 5:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Christopher Karnes (Chair), Andrew Strobel (Vice-Chair), Morgan Dornier, Robb Krehbiel, Brett Marlo, Matthew Martenson, Brett Santhuff, Anthony Steele

**ABSENT:** Alyssa Torrez

### **A. Call to Order**

Chair Karnes called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. A quorum was declared.

Chair Karnes read the Land Acknowledgement.

### **B. Approval of Agenda**

*Vice-Chair Strobel moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Commissioner Steele seconded the motion.*

Lihuang Wung, Senior Planner, noted that additional materials were added to the original packet and the revised agenda packet is available online.

*The motion passed unanimously.*

### **C. Approval of Minutes**

There were no meeting minutes to approve.

### **D. Public Comments**

Mr. Wung reported that six comments were received regarding the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection and three comments were received regarding the Tidelands Subarea Plan.

### **E. Disclosure of Contacts**

There were no disclosures of contacts.

### **F. Discussion Items**

#### **1. South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District – Consideration of a Moratorium**

Stephen Atkinson, Principal Planner, presented the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District (STGPD) moratorium consideration, including the project scope and schedule, questions heard from previous meetings, an overview of comments received at the community meeting held on July 27, 2022, comments received prior to that community meeting, effects on existing uses or permits, past moratoria, regulatory framework, and the SEPA process.

Chris Seaman, Engineer, Tacoma Fire Department, outlined the role of Fire Code.

Commissioner Santhuff requested clarification on which agency conducts the SEPA review for projects in the area.

Mr. Atkinson reviewed recent code updates, the Tidelands Interim Regulations process, and how those intersect with work in South Tacoma.

Commissioner Steele asked about the notification radius and suggested expanding the boundaries of that notification.

Mr. Atkinson further reviewed the Tideflats Interim Regulations, the Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations, hazardous material storage uses, heavy industrial uses, and known contaminated sites.

Mr. Seaman provided information regarding marijuana production and processing.

Commissioner Dorner stated that it is important to look at the uses related to contaminated sites and to identify if there is a trend in specific uses becoming contaminated.

Commissioner Martenson asked about what data is used to make the determination of infiltration facilities.

Vice-Chair Strobel requested clarification on closed UST permits, if those include some level of cleanup, and how long the open UST permits have been open.

Mr. Atkinson provided staff observations, upcoming amendments, and next steps.

Chair Karnes noted the timeline and prompted commissioners to express if a moratorium is warranted and why or why not.

Commissioner Krehbiel expressed support for a moratorium and encouraged staff to extend the moratorium to include light industrial uses and zones and asked for the types and number of project applications and permits in this area.

Chair Karnes noted that a moratorium could potentially divert city resources from the groundwater work plan and the Commission's work program.

Commissioner Steele requested clarification regarding contamination, including frequency, the number of existing contaminated sites, mitigating those sites, and contamination at marijuana locations.

Vice-Chair Strobel asked about prohibited uses in relation to the Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations, requested information on prohibited uses that existed prior to the groundwater protection district being instated, and noted limitations in the regulatory framework.

Commissioner Dorner requested clarification regarding facilities engaging in hazardous waste and being permitted and potential interim regulations in this district and provided comments regarding the potential impacts and disadvantages of a moratorium.

Commissioner Santhuff requested information on the Health Department's open underground storage map, how far the recharge area extends into south Pierce County, and the scope of work.

Commissioner Marlo noted that there are significant concerns that need to be addressed and expressed interest in hearing more regarding the moratorium.

Commissioner Martenson expressed concerns regarding the change to allow infiltration.

Vice-Chair Strobel requested additional information on the impacts of a moratorium.

Chair Karnes summarized the Commission's discussion and direction for staff.

The Planning Commission recessed at 6:57 p.m. and reconvened at 7:02 p.m.

## **2. Tideflats Subarea Plan**

Mr. Atkinson provided an overview of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping process and previous Commission actions to assign Commissioner Krehbiel as lead to draft a comment letter. Commissioner Krehbiel outlined the content of the letter.

Commissioner Santhuff suggested correcting "One Tacoma" to the "One Tacoma Comprehensive Plan" in the first paragraph and changing "better suited" to "well suited" under the Puyallup Tribe Land Management and Environmental Restoration section.

*Commissioner Steele moved to adopt the letter with recommended changes. Commissioner Marlo seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following votes:*

Ayes: 7 – Dorner, Karnes, Krehbiel, Marlo, Martenson, Santhuff, Steele  
Abstain: 1 – Strobel

### 3. Planning Commission Annual Report and Work Program

Brian Boudet, Planning Manager, presented the Planning Commission's Annual Report for 2021-2022 and Work Program for 2022-2024, noting the reporting requirement and schedule, accomplishments from 2021-2022, special notes, and an outline of the proposed work program for 2022-2024.

Chair Karnes requested that credit be given to commissioners who have been involved in extra projects and asked that the off-cycle items be prioritized to ensure the Commission is not overloaded.

Vice-Chair Strobel agreed with Chair Karnes and noted the importance of conveying the flux of the work program to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee.

Commissioner Steele provided comments regarding the Commission's time and timing.

Commissioner Dorner asked if there are items that are commission-initiated.

Commissioner Santhuff suggested asking the Commission if there are items to add to the docket when looking at the annual amendment cycle.

*Vice-Chair Strobel moved to approve the Planning Commission Annual Report for 2021-2022 and Work Program for 2022-2024 as submitted. Commissioner Dorner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### G. Upcoming Meetings (Tentative Agendas)

(1) Agenda for the August 17, 2022, meeting includes:

- STGPD Moratorium Consideration – Recommendation
- 2023 Amendment – Shipping Containers, Electric Fences, and Minor Amendments

(2) Agenda for the September 7, 2022, meeting includes:

- Election of Officers
- College Park Historic Special Review District – Debriefing of June 1, 2022, Public Hearing
- 2023 Amendment Assessment – Additional applications

(3) Agenda for the September 21, 2022, meeting includes:

- Design Review Program – Workshop
- Home In Tacoma

(4) Agenda for the October 5, 2022, meeting includes:

- College Park Historic Special Review District – Recommendation

Mr. Wung outlined the upcoming agenda items, and Mr. Boudet provided additional comments

### H. Communication Items

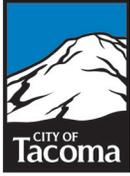
The Commission acknowledged receipt of communication items on the agenda.

### I. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

*\*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/](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/committees_boards_commissions/planning_commission/agendas_and_minutes/)





**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Planning Commission Work Program – Mid-Cycle Update  
Planning Commission Meeting Operations and Bylaws – Review**  
**Memo Date:** January 11, 2023  
**Meeting Date:** January 18, 2023

**Action Requested:**  
Informational, Action.

**Discussion:**

At the meeting on January 18, 2023, staff will provide an update on the Commission’s Work Program for 2022-2024. The current annual Work Program (attached) was approved by the Commission and concurred with by the Council’s Infrastructure, Planning & Sustainability (IPS) Committee in August 2022. As discussed at that time, staff is providing a mid-cycle check-in with the Commission and the IPS Committee on the implementation of the work program. The IPS Committee update is scheduled for February 8, 2023.

The Commission will also review and consider amending its Rules & Regulations (bylaws). Modifications to the Commission’s bylaws were discussed this past year and were scheduled to be considered in September, but the item was postponed at the end of a long meeting. The attached version of the bylaws shows a potential change, which is based on prior Commission input and would remove the existing language that strongly discourages electronic participation of members to recognize and better reflect the “new normal” with regards to hybrid meetings and improved technology to facilitate electronic participation.

Lastly, staff will also provide a summary of input gathered from the Commissioners during our annual individual meetings over the past few months. The Commission may take the opportunity to review and consider certain logistical and administrative issues, if any, to improve its conduct of business and meeting operations.

**Staff Contacts:**

- Brian Boudet, [bboudet@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:bboudet@cityoftacoma.org)
- Stephen Atkinson, [satkinson@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:satkinson@cityoftacoma.org)

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Planning Commission Work Program for 2022-2024
- Attachment 2: Planning Commission Bylaws (including potential amendment)

c. Peter Huffman, Director





## Planning Commission Work Program (2022-2024)

(Approved by the Planning Commission, August 3, 2022;  
 Concurred by the Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee, August 10, 2022)

### Expected Completion in 2022

- **South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District – Consideration of a Moratorium** *Expected Council Action September/October 2022*
- **Tideflats Non-Interim Regulations – Shoreline Amendment** *Expected Council Action August 2022*
- **Proposed College Park Historic District** *Expected Recommendation October 2022*
- **2023-2028 Capital Facilities Program (CFP)** *Expected Council Action November 2022*
- **Design Review Program – Startup/Creation** *Expected Recommendation December 2022*
- **McKinley Neighborhood Plan** *Expected Recommendation December 2022*
- **South Tacoma Economic Green Zone – Scoping**
- **2023 Annual Amendment Package – Scoping:**
  - Mor Furniture Land Use Designation and Rezone (private application)
  - South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District Code Update – Phase 1B
  - Shipping Containers for Storage (Sub Res #40955, 5/10/22)
  - Electric Fences – Expanded Allowances (Sub Res #40955, 5/10/22)
  - Delivery-Only Businesses
  - Commercial Zoning Update – Phase 1 (includes items in Ord #28798, 12/14/21)
  - Minor Plan and Code Amendments
- **GMA 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Preliminary Scoping (key issues):**
  - **Plan Updates:**
    - Coordination/integration with Tacoma 2025 Strategic Plan update (CMO)
    - Growth Targets and Consistency with VISION 2050
    - Transportation Master Plan Update
    - Tribal Lands Coordination and Compatibility
    - 20 Minute Neighborhoods and Performance Measures
    - Transportation Master Plan Update (PW)
    - Economic Development Element (CEDD)
    - Mixed-use Centers Policy Updates
    - Climate Action Plan Integration – GHG Targets and Implementation Actions
    - Watershed Plan Elements (ES)
    - Historic Preservation Plan Update and Integration
    - Level of Service Standards and Priority Project Lists (multiple)
  - **Code Updates:**
    - Critical Areas Preservation Ordinance Update
    - Institutional Zoning
    - Mixed-Use Centers Code Updates

## Expected Work Program for 2023 *(preliminary)*

- **2023 Annual Amendment Package – Recommendations to Council for Adoption**
- **2024 Annual Amendment Package – Scoping and Assessment**
- **GMA 2024 Periodic Update – Analysis**
- **Home In Tacoma Project – Phase 2:** zoning, standards, affordability, anti-displacement, infrastructure, and programmatic components (includes zoning-related items from ADU Accelerator discussion)
- **Housing Equity and Anti-racism Policy Development** (Housing Equity Taskforce, jointly with Human Rights Commission)
- **Tideflats Subarea Plan and EIS**
- **Pacific Avenue Corridor Subarea Plan and EIS (“Picture Pac Ave”)**
- **South Tacoma Economic Green Zone – Subarea Plan** (pending budget consideration)
- **Design Review Program** (program launch)
- **Neighborhood Planning Program – Proctor Neighborhood Plan**
- **Neighborhood Planning Program – Additional Neighborhood Plans** (depending on resources)
- **Cushman/Adams Substation Reuse Study**
- **Public Notice and Engagement – Comprehensive Review**

## Expected Work Program for 2024 *(very preliminary)*

- **GMA 2024 Periodic Update – Recommendations for Council Adoption**
- **2024 Annual Amendment Package – Recommendations for Council Adoption**
- **Tideflats Subarea Plan and EIS – Potential Adoption**
- **Pacific Avenue Corridor Subarea Plan and EIS (“Picture Pac Ave”) – Potential Adoption**
- **South Tacoma Economic Green Zone – Subarea Plan** (pending budget consideration)
- **Home in Tacoma Project – Implementation and Refinement**
- **Design Review Program – Implementation and Refinement**
- **Neighborhood Planning Program – Implementation and New Planning Efforts** (pending budget consideration)
- **2025-2030 Capital Facilities Program (CFP)**

## On-going Planning Issues

- Six-Year Comprehensive Transportation Program
- Joint Meetings of the Planning Commission with appropriate groups (e.g., the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Transportation Commission, and Community Council)

- Transportation Master Plan Implementation, in coordination with the Transportation Commission (e.g., impact fees study, transportation network planning, streetscape design guidance, signature trails development, etc.)
- Light Rail Expansion projects (including the Hilltop Links to Opportunity Program, ST3 Tacoma Dome Link Extension, Tacoma-TCC Link Extension, Sounder Station Access Improvements, etc.)
- Pierce Transit Long-Range Plan, Stream System Expansion Study (SSES) and Pacific Avenue BRT Project
- Historic Preservation, in coordination with the Landmarks Preservation Commission (e.g., Historic TDR, Home In Tacoma Project, integration of Historic Preservation Plan with *One Tacoma* Comprehensive Plan, preservation incentive tools, educational programs, etc.)
- Subarea Plan Implementation – North Downtown, South Downtown, Hilltop and Tacoma Mall Neighborhood
- Residential Infill Pilot Program – Implementation and project reviews
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) Council Reporting
- Citizen Participation and Public Outreach Enhancements
- Proactive Equity/Social Justice/Anti-Racism integration in policies and programs
- Schuster Corridor Trail
- Fossil Fuel Tracking and Council Reporting

## Regional and Cross-Jurisdictional Issues

- Regional Transportation Issues, in coordination with the Transportation Commission (e.g., Tacoma LINK and Central LINK Light Rail Expansions, Pierce Transit Long-Range Plan and BRT Project)
- PSRC Regional Centers Framework Update, Vision 2050 implementation, GMA review
- PCRC County-Wide Planning Policies, County-level Centers Update, Population Allocations, Buildable Lands, Annexations and Pre-Annexation Planning

## Emerging and Deferred Issues

- Corridor Plans, focused on TOD corridor planning (such as 19<sup>th</sup> Street)
- Mixed-Use Centers Implementation Programming (Action Strategies/Master Plans)
- Mixed-Use Centers Core/Pedestrian Street Review
- Parking Update (RPA, refinements along light rail, Mixed-Use Centers, design, etc.)
- Potential Local Historic Districts – coordinated with LPC (e.g., Stadium)
- Urban Forestry Implementation (landscaping, tree-preservation, open space, etc.)  
(*coordinated with Environmental Services*)
- Street Typology and Designation System Review
- Post-Pandemic Emerging Land Use Trends/Shifts
- Form-based Residential Standards (lot coverage, FAR, etc.) (*possibly with Home In Tacoma*)
- Tribal Planning Coordination
- Sign Code Update
- Pre-Annexation Planning (Browns Point/Dash Point, Parkland/Spanaway)
- Station-Area Planning (such as Portland Avenue/I-5 area and Four Corners)
- Self-Storage Code Amendments (zoning and standards)
- View Sensitive District – comprehensive review



**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; August 1, 2018; ~~and August 21, 2019;~~ and January 18, 2023. 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

**Section 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.

## **Section 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.

## **Section 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.

## **Section 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 the Council Chambers of the Tacoma Municipal Building, 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. Electronic Participation in Meetings – Members of the Commission may participate in a meeting through electronic communications, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or other appropriate technology available at the meeting location that enables all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other simultaneously and instantaneously. ~~Members who wish to participate in such a meeting must notify Staff before the scheduled start time for the meeting, allowing adequate time for Staff to make necessary preparations.~~ Participation in such a meeting shall constitute presence in person at such meeting, and that presence shall count toward a quorum of the Commission for all purposes. ~~Electronic participation in meetings shall not be used on a regular basis; it should be used to accommodate special needs of the Commission as may be determined by the Chair or to accommodate members whose physical presence at the meeting is prevented due to prior obligations, personal illness or disability, a family or other emergency, or unforeseen circumstances.~~
- 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. For the purpose of this provision, "meetings" shall mean "regular meetings" as defined in Section IV.A above.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## **Section V. Records**

- A. The Commission's adopted summary minutes of the public meetings and public hearings, as well as the audio recordings of these meetings and hearings as long as they are retained, shall be the official records of proceedings and be maintained by Staff consistent with state law, RCW 40.14.
- 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.

## **Section 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.

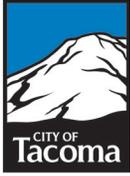
## **Section VII. Miscellaneous**

- 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.

## **Section VIII. Rules and Regulations Amendments**

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

###



**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **2024 Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**Memo Date:** January 10, 2023  
**Meeting Date:** January 18, 2023

**Action Requested:**  
Informational.

**Discussion:**

At the Planning Commission’s meeting on January 18, 2023, Comprehensive Planning staff will provide an introductory presentation regarding the upcoming update to the *One Tacoma* Comprehensive Plan, including a general timeline, phases, and scope considerations.

**Project Summary:**

Tacoma’s Comprehensive Plan, [One Tacoma](#), is the City’s official statement concerning its vision for future growth and development. It identifies goals, policies, and strategies for maintaining the health, welfare, and quality of life of Tacoma’s residents. The Comprehensive Plan is comprised of numerous individual elements, including elements addressing such important issues as urban form, design and development, environment and watershed health, parks and recreation, housing, economic development, and transportation and infrastructure.

The City of Tacoma amends its Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis as permitted by state law. In addition to these regular amendments, the [Growth Management Act](#) (GMA) requires counties and cities to periodically conduct a thorough review of their plans and regulations to bring them in line with any relevant changes in the GMA, and to accommodate updated growth targets. [RCW 36.70A.130](#) establishes the review procedures and schedule for Comprehensive Plan amendments and periodic review. Tacoma last completed such a “periodic update” in 2015 and is mandated to undertake and complete another “periodic update” by the end of 2024.

In addition, the City of Tacoma is the designated “Metropolitan City” for Pierce County and is allocated, through [Vision 2050](#) and the [Countywide Planning Policies](#), to accommodate a significant share of the region’s population and employment growth. The Puget Sound Regional Council evaluates and certifies local comprehensive plans for consistency with the multi-county planning policies (see the [Plan Review Manual](#), page 27). The Comprehensive Plan update will include a review and update to ensure consistency with the goals and policies of Vision 2050.

**Staff Contacts:**

- Stephen Atkinson, Principal Planner, [satkinson@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:satkinson@cityoftacoma.org).
- c. Peter Huffman, Director







**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Stephen Antupit & Carl Metz, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Urban Design Review Program – Program Elements Next Steps**  
**Memo Date:** January 11, 2023  
**Meeting Date:** January 18, 2023

**Action Requested:**  
Comment and Direction.

**Discussion:**

At the Planning Commission’s meeting on January 18, 2023, Urban Design Studio staff will provide a briefing on proposed program elements for the Urban Design Review project. This briefing is seeking feedback and direction from the Commission in anticipation of a Spring 2023 release of the full Program proposal for Public Review. Staff will present the findings from the follow-up survey soliciting Commissioner input on program elements that were previously presented at the December 7, 2022, Planning Commission meeting.

1. Program Elements

At the conclusion of the project briefing at the Planning Commission meeting of December 7, 2022, staff were directed to develop and distribute a poll for individual Commissioners to provide feedback on Urban Design Review program elements as presented to the Commission.

The poll was distributed to all Commissioners as an online survey on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Four Commissioners responded, either by completing the survey or via email message directly to staff. In summary, staff received from Commissioners’ input on these program elements:

- Different project size thresholds should be applied in Neighborhood Centers than Downtown, the Mall Area, and Crossroads Centers.
- Different project size thresholds should be applied to engage a Design Review Board on projects in Neighborhood Centers than Downtown, the Mall Area, and Crossroads Centers.
- Design Review Board involvement should encompass advisory and decision-making roles, depending on the size of project reviewed.
- Design Review Board should represent a mix of expertise, and be involved at both early conceptual guidance and at the conclusion of the design review process.
- Projects located on Pedestrian Streets should be considered for greater threshold sensitivity.

Please refer to **Attachment 1** for detailed discussion of the topics for which feedback was solicited, Commission input received (either via the survey or at the December 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting) and based on that input, staff’s recommendation of what to include in the Public Review draft package. The attachment is arranged around two main topics: Urban Design Review Thresholds and Urban Design Review Board. Each of these discuss a subset of related questions that were included in the survey along with a summary of the responses received, staff’s analysis, and recommendation for the public review draft.



### Urban Design Review Thresholds

- Neighborhood Centers
  - Tier I Threshold: Baseline/Administrative-Review
  - Tier II Threshold: Board-Review
- Other Mixed Use Centers
  - Tier I Threshold: Baseline/Administrative-Review
  - Tier II Threshold: Board-Review
- Additional Threshold Metrics

### Urban Design Review Board

- Role & Engagement
- Composition

At the Commission meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>, staff will ask the Commission to provide direction on these elements for the purposes of developing the forthcoming Public Review draft.

### 2. Next Steps-- Potential Code Amendments

Along with establishing an Urban Design Review process and new Urban Design Guidelines, Urban Design Studio (UDS) staff expect to include a package of Code amendments including changes to certain building design and other related development standards. Work is ongoing with PDS Current Planning staff and the Project Advisory Group. At the Commission meeting of January 18, 2023, staff will briefly introduce these elements of the work. Staff will continue working to further develop these amendment proposals in anticipation of detailed briefing on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

A public review draft of the consolidated proposal will be presented to the Commission after review and discussion of the relevant Code amendment component of the program.

### **Project Summary:**

Information on the work of the Urban Design Studio can be found on the Program website at <https://www.cityoftacoma.org/UrbanDesign>.

### **Prior Actions:**

Staff have briefed the Commission in numerous presentations between September 2019 and December 2022. Most recently, notable topics on which the Commission provided direction and input are:

- Limiting the geographic scope of the Urban Design Review Program's applicability;
- Reviewing relevant permit activity/volumes and regional precedents/best practices;
- Participating in a project-level review simulation workshop with PAG members and consultants to test and give feedback on the draft Urban Design Guidelines; and
- Reviewing community priority input collected through the online open house survey.

### **Staff Contacts:**

- Stephen Antupit [santupit@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:santupit@cityoftacoma.org)
- Carl Metz [cmetz@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:cmetz@cityoftacoma.org)

### **Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Urban Design Program Threshold & Board Structures – Commissioner Input Summary and Staff Preferred Public Review Package Options
- c. Peter Huffman, Director



# City of Tacoma Urban Design Program Threshold & Board Structures

## Planning Commissioner Input Summary and Staff Preferred Public Review Package Options

### Background

#### **Follow-up Survey to Planning Commission Briefing of December 7, 2022**

At the direction of the Commission, staff developed and distributed a short recap of program components and options for Commissioners to individually consider and provide further input. The input will be used in developing the Public Review draft of the full program proposal.

An online survey of ten questions was distributed to all nine Commissioners on December 16, 2022. A reminder email was sent to all Commissioners on December 27. Within the two-week period provided for responses, three (3) Commissioners completed the survey. One additional Commissioner provided comments via email that addressed some of the topics included in the online survey and are incorporated within this report. Additionally, where a Planning Commissioner voiced strong preference on one of the topics at the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, their comments are also reflected here.

The document is broken up into two main topics: Urban Design Review Thresholds and Urban Design Review Board. Each of these are accompanied by a subset of related questions, all of which were included in the survey. A summary of the responses received and staff's analysis and recommendation for the public review draft follows each of these questions.

As a reminder, this exercise is only for the purposes of developing the public review draft ahead of a public hearing. A final recommendation will only be forwarded onto Council following the public hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. This final recommendation could likely include revisions to the public review draft being developed.

#### **General Urban Design Review Process Structure**

It is expected that there will effectively be three tracks for Urban Design Review for all developments located within the required review geographies (Downtown RGC, Tacoma Mall RGC, Crossroads Centers, and Neighborhood Centers):

1. Exempt: Exempt from any discretionary Urban Design Review (below a baseline threshold)
2. Tier I: Subject to Administrative-level Urban Design Review (above a baseline threshold and below secondary threshold)
3. Tier II: Subject to Board-level Urban Design Review (above a secondary threshold)

#### **Neighborhood Centers**

The question to whether Neighborhood Centers should have lower baseline and/or secondary (Board) threshold was presented to the Planning Commission at the December 7, 2022, meeting and within the follow up survey. Based on the responses, there appears to be strong support for the idea of having lower thresholds within the Neighborhood Centers and is reflected below.

## Urban Design Review Thresholds

### Tier I Thresholds: Baseline/Administrative-Review

As we have described before, previous permit analysis reviewed a baseline threshold of 5,000 sq. ft. building area. This analysis identified possible concerns related to staff and Board capacity, which could result in unnecessary permit processing delays. Separately, the Urban Design Review Project Advisory Group (PAG) members voiced concern that a 5,000 sq. ft. building area threshold seemed too small and that buildings of this size do not necessitate a new, discretionary review process.

At the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, staff asked the Commission if they felt 5,000 sq. ft. was an appropriate threshold to require Urban Design Review or if that threshold should be something greater. Given the potential of having different baseline thresholds for Neighborhood Centers and all other Mixed Use Centers, the survey restated the question for each of these types of geographies separately, shown below.

### Tier II Thresholds: Board-Review

Staff provided permit analysis based on an 80,000 sq. ft. building area threshold for a Board review processes. Staff believe developments at this scale are distinct from smaller developments in terms of community impacts and that the expected number of projects would be administratively manageable. That being said, the number itself is somewhat arbitrary and could be shifted but it is important that this number is informed by staff and Board administrative capacity, particularly at the program's initial launch.

## Neighborhood Centers

### Tier I: Baseline/Administrative-Review Threshold

Staff presented the following choices to guide the *Tier I: Baseline/Administrative-Review* threshold within the online survey:

**1**

What should be the **project size threshold** to determine if a project is **exempt** from Urban Design Review (UDR) or **requires** UDR within **Neighborhood Centers**?

20,000 sq. ft.

10,000 sq. ft.

5,000 sq. ft.

Other

### Responses

| Options        | Number of Selections |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 20,000 sq. ft. | 2                    |
| 10,000 sq. ft. | 2                    |
| 5,000 sq. ft.  | 0                    |
| [Other]        | 0                    |

**Staff Comments and Preferred Public Review Package Option**

Whereas previous permit analysis identified concerns with having a relatively low 5,000 sq. ft. building area baseline threshold citywide primarily related to program capacity, shifting this baseline to 10,000 sq. ft. citywide relieved most of these concerns. Therefore, having a 10,000 sq. ft. baseline for Neighborhood Centers and a higher threshold elsewhere would similarly address these concerns.

**Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option:** 10,000 sq. ft. building area baseline threshold for Neighborhood Centers.

**Tier II: Board-Review Threshold**

Staff presented the following choices to guide the *Tier II: Board-Review Threshold* within the online survey:

3

What should be the **project size threshold** to determine if a project warrants **Board involvement** within **Neighborhood Centers**?

100,000 sq. ft.

60,000 sq. ft.

40,000 sq. ft.

Other

**Responses**

| Options                | Number of Selections |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 100,000 sq. ft.        | 1                    |
| 60,000 sq. ft.         | 0                    |
| 40,000 sq. ft.         | 1                    |
| 20,000 sq. ft. [Other] | 2                    |

**Staff Comments and Preferred Public Review Package Option**

Given the proportionally smaller number of projects within the Neighborhood Centers, shifting this threshold to as low as 20,000 sq. ft. should be manageable – though, it might begin to push close to program capacity. Additionally, Urban Design Studio staff have been attempting to distinguish the development of the Urban Design Review program from the work of the Home in Tacoma project in terms of geography but also scale of development.

Staff’s primary concern with shifting the Board review threshold to 20,000 sq. ft. is that projects of this size might be within the limits of development that could result from Home in Tacoma’s rezoning efforts, which is not expected to include a required discretionary review process like Urban Design Review, let

alone one that requires a public Board review. Staff’s concern is that setting a threshold this low could convey mixed or inconsistent messaging and would be better revisited following the program’s launch.

**Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option: 40,000 sq. ft. building area threshold for Board Review in Neighborhood Centers.**

### Other Mixed Use Centers

#### Tier I: Baseline/Administrative-Review Threshold

Staff presented the following choices to guide the *Tier I: Baseline/Administrative-Review* threshold within the online survey:

2

What should be the **project size threshold** to determine if a project is **exempt** from UDR or **requires** UDR within **other Mixed Use Centers**?

- 40,000 sq. ft.
- 20,000 sq. ft.
- 15,000 sq. ft.
- Other

#### Responses

| Options        | Number of Selections |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 40,000 sq. ft. | 1                    |
| 20,000 sq. ft. | 4                    |
| 15,000 sq. ft. | 0                    |
| [Other]        | 0                    |

#### Staff Comments and Preferred Public Review Package Option

For the same reasons previously described, staff supports establishing a baseline threshold within the other Mixed Use Centers to a number greater than 5,000 sq. ft. and greater than that of the Neighborhood Centers. For this reason, staff is supportive of the majority of responders’ preferred threshold.

**Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option: 20,000 sq. ft. building area baseline threshold for Other Mixed Use Centers.**

#### Tier II: Board-Review Threshold

Staff presented the following choices within the online survey

What should be the **project size threshold** to determine if a project warrants **Board involvement -- in other Mixed Use Centers**

- 120,000 sq. ft.
- 100,000 sq. ft.
- 60,000 sq. ft.
- Other

### Responses

| Options                | Number of Selections |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 120,000 sq. ft.        | 1                    |
| 100,000 sq. ft.        | 1                    |
| 60,000 sq. ft.         | 2                    |
| 20,000 sq. ft. [Other] | 1                    |

### Staff Comments and Preferred Public Review Package Option

As presented above, the Planning Commission has not presented a consensus for establishing a Board-review threshold for the other Mixed Use Centers-- with suggested thresholds ranging from 20,000 sq. ft. to 120,000 sq. ft. with a few in between. Staff generally concur with the idea of projects of 60,000 sq. ft. could likely benefit from a public Board review. However, this threshold could add two or more additional permits annually, which could present Board capacity and management challenges. Like any of these thresholds, this could be revisited in the future and therefore staff recommend a higher threshold number at the program's launch, especially given the reduced Neighborhood Center threshold.

**Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option:** 100,000 sq. ft. building area threshold for Board Review in Other Mixed Use Centers.

### Additional Threshold Metrics

Staff have focused on building size for establishing a threshold to determine if Urban Design Review is required and if Board review is warranted. However, Planning Commissioners have inquired about other possible metrics that might additionally address program priorities, including existing built context. In considering how this might be described in a clear and easily administered manner, staff developed a few additional metrics that could be used to establish an urban design-focused sensitivity reflected by a set of lower thresholds. These metrics include development site area, Pedestrian Street adjacency, location on a corner, location at a Mixed Use Center boundary, or Mixed Use District (X-District) Zoning within the Downtown. To be clear, these were not meant to be exhaustive of the possible ways additional metrics could be developed but to provide examples of how this concept could be approached. ( Note that staff tested many of these same potential metrics in the online open house survey conducted earlier in 2022.)

## Other Threshold metrics

Various metrics could additionally be employed as thresholds for requiring Urban Design Review. For example, mapped Pedestrian Street frontage, site size, and/or site prominence characteristics (e.g., corner lots) could be employed, although clear and objective screening assessment or accurate measurement may be challenged by data collection limitations.

### 2. Urban Design Review Program Elements: Review Thresholds

#### UDR Thresholds

#### *Potential non-Building Area threshold metrics*



Site Area (>0.5 acre)



Pedestrian Street



Corner Site



MUC Boundary



X-District (Downtown)

Urban Design Review Program – Planning Commission | December 7, 2022



14

9

Should any of these metrics be used--along with building size-- to determine if a project is required to go through an urban design review process? (select any/all)

- Site area (e.g., >0.5 ac)
- Frontage on mapped pedestrian street
- Corner site
- At transition boundary within a mapped Center
- Within Downtown's "X-district" zones (i.e., Hilltop, Stadium)
- Other

Of the three survey responses, two Commissioners indicated possible support (“maybe”) of using these additional metrics, with one unsupportive. Of the two “maybes,” a mix of metrics were indicated as possible options with the Pedestrian Street adjacency being the only commonly-cited metric. An additional set of comments received appeared to suggest the consideration of additional context-responsive metrics like building size and height as they relate to existing development.

In developing the metrics presented, staff wanted to focus on those that could be relatively easily determined by applicants, staff, and the general public alike. To this point, staff presented a “Mixed Use Center boundary” metric to serve as a proxy for the suggested metric of adjacency to existing lower-intensity development. Staff also want to make it clear that a project’s relationship and responsiveness to particular context features such as Pedestrian Street frontage and adjacency to lower-intensity zones are points of emphasis within the Design Guidelines and would be addressed whether it be through an administrative or board-level Urban Design Review. In summary, staff shares the Commission’s interest in making sure developments are responsive to unique site conditions, such as Pedestrian Street adjacency, but finds that adding another set of thresholds adds unnecessary complexity to the program for its initial launch and would be better explored in the future. The one open-ended comment received from a Commissioner (in Question #10) made this same suggestion to defer consideration of additional metrics.

***Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option:*** *Staff think there is logic to this concept and warrants further consideration but that it would be more important to avoid unnecessary complexity to the program at initial launch.*

## Urban Design Review Board

### Board Role & Engagement

Two questions were posed related to the role of the Board and the timing of their engagement.

The first question asked if the Board should be advisory with final decisions being Director-level (i.e., administrative) or if they should render final, quasi-judicial decisions. At the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, we heard some support for having the Board having decision-making authority and the survey responses were mixed. One suggested a hybrid approach where smaller projects receive advisory guidance and larger projects are subject to a Board-level decision.

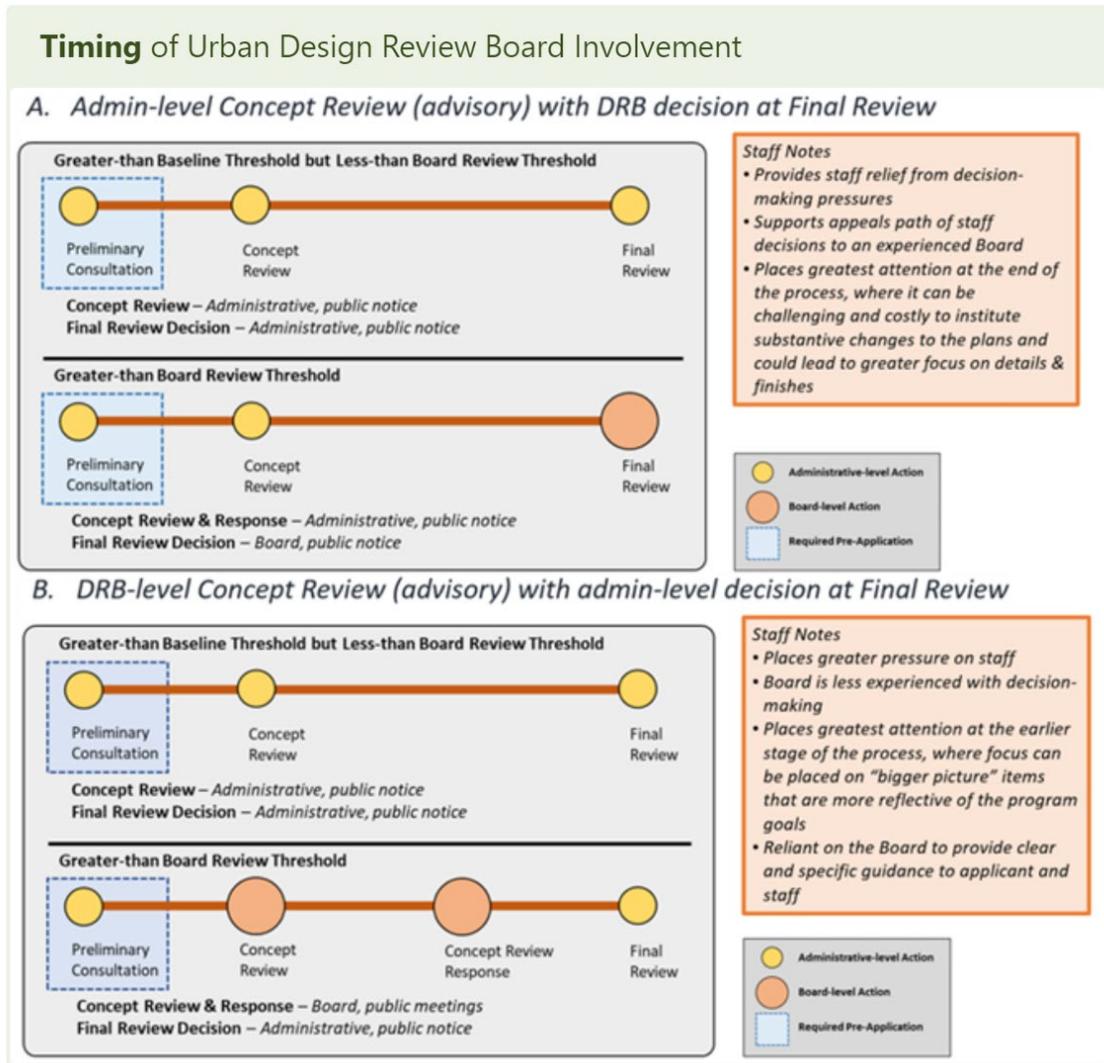
Staff find each option to present strengths and weakness worth considering.

- **Advisory:** Staff find strengths of having the Board operate as an advisory body include a reduced likelihood of drawn out final review process, so long as strong limits to the number of advisory-level meetings is established and clear guidance is provided by the Board. Weaknesses of the advisory role include placing a great amount of pressure on staff during final review, particularly pertaining to elements that might have not been addressed with the Board’s guidance, and reduced public transparency of the final review.
- **Decision-making:** Staff find strengths of having the Board a decision-making body include greater accountability for the developer and design team to be responsive to Board direction and greater public transparency. Weaknesses include potential for undue focus on project details that might not be a primary concern of the Urban Design Review program, which can lead to drawn-out reviews and be more susceptible to lengthy appeals process.

***Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option:*** *Staff believe either option is viable but find the strengths of granting the Board a decision-making authority generally out-weigh its weaknesses. However, staff*

suggest establishing strict limits to help mitigate some of these potential negative outcomes such as process review times and a maximum number of meetings that can be conducted before a decision is rendered.

The second question relates to when in the Board should be engaged in the review process. This was presented as taking place either at the end at Final Review or earlier at Concept Review.



Should the Board be involved at **Early Guidance, Final Design Review Decision**, or both points?

- Early Urban Design Guidance
- Final Design Review Decision
- Other

Previous drafts of this project presented a process like that depicted in the Option A workflow above with an administrative-level Concept Review and Board-level Final Review decision. This type of structure naturally emphasizes the Final Review in terms of the program priorities and public engagement. However, current staff find shifting this emphasis and engagement earlier in the process more strongly align with the program's emphasis on urban design concerns, contextual fit and design approaches, which can only be efficiently addressed earlier in the project development process. With this in mind, staff presented the option of moving the Board engagement to the Concept Review step and having the decision be made at an administrative level, presented as Option B. Admittedly, having the decision made at the administrative level was primarily to speak to some of the concerns staff have heard regarding introducing a public review process generally. These options are obviously not mutually exclusive and some of the Commission's comments reflect this point. In fact, only one response supported limiting Board engagement to the early guidance stage. All other comments supported the idea of having the Board involved at both the Concept and Final Review stages.

***Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option:*** *Given staff's position regarding the Board's authority and the responses received by Planning Commissioners, staff recommend a process that engages the Board at the Concept and Final Review stages. Staff reiterate the importance of adopting and adhering to review process limits to help mitigate against potentially lengthy review timelines.*

### Urban Design Review Board Composition

Three options for the composition of the Board were presented to the Planning Commission. All three assumed seven (7) members but the professional/discipline representations were different for each.

- Option A: The first was reflective of an early draft describing a minimum number of design professionals (architects, landscape architect, urban planner, etc), construction/building field, graphic design, and a non-professional representing the community at large.
- Option B: The second option had a greater focus on design and construction fields and dropped the general public representation. This previously presented to the project's advisory group.
- Option C: The third option is similar to the other by including a minimum number of design and construction fields but incorporated representatives for other urban design priorities that are reflected in the Urban Design Review Guidelines' seven focus areas but not necessarily reflected

in the other Board roster frameworks. This includes the addition of Active Transportation, Sustainability/Green Building, and Culture/Heritage/History representatives.

## Composition of Urban Design Review Board

We anticipate a Council-appointed Board of seven (7) members.

## 2. Urban Design Review Program Elements: Board Composition

### Q5: Board Composition: What should be the mix of expertise?

| Option A.<br>Profession– oriented<br>(2021 consultant draft)   | Option B.<br>Project Advisory Group<br>feedback (summer 2022)   | Option C.<br>Reflect urban design priorities  |
|--|---|---|
| 2- Architect/Landscape Architect/Urban Planner- Designer/other design professional                                   | 2-Architects<br>2- Landscape Architects<br>1- Urban Design/Planner<br>1-2 Development/Engineer/ Construction/Green Building | <b>Design &amp; Development Professionals (4 members)</b><br>• 2 maximum from any one discipline  |
| At least one: Graphic design/ wayfinding<br>At least one: Construction/ building<br>At least one: Community at large |   | <b>Other Expertise (3 members)</b><br>• Active Transport<br>• Sustainable Development/Green Building<br>• Culture/Heritage/History<br>(could come from Design Professional disciplines) |

7

Which Board composition do you think would best align with the values and objectives of the Tacoma Urban Design Program?

- Option A**--Architects and allied Design Professionals (from 2021 draft)
- Option B**-- Development and Design Professionals (from PAG review)
- Option C**-- Design Professionals + Diverse Urban Community Expertise

Planning Commissioner responses included support for the second (1) and third options (3). An additional suggestion described an even split between professions and “citizens.” Staff took this suggestion to mean a generally equal balance between professionals and non-professional community members.

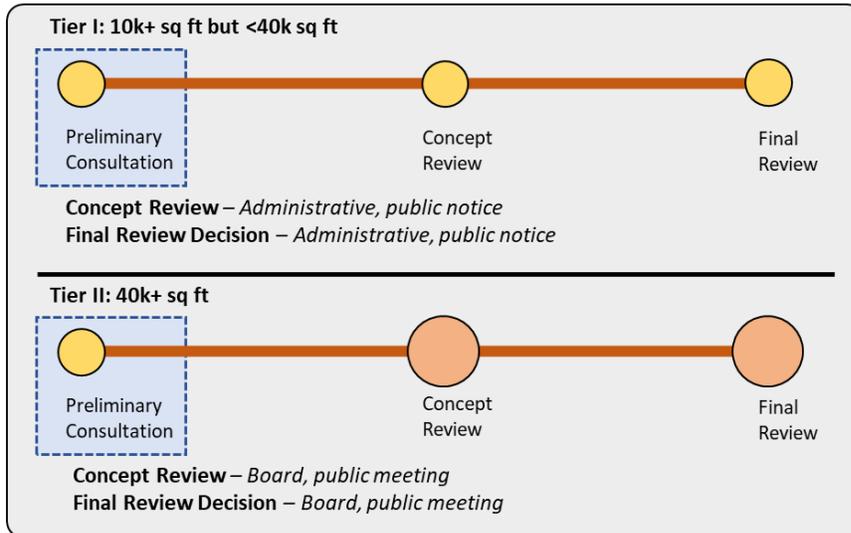
**Staff Preferred Public Review Package Option:** *Given the Commissioner responses received, staff prefers the third Option C presented. It is staff’s belief these new positions could be less reliant on professional qualifications and filled by community members that demonstrate sufficient knowledge and experience in the subject matter. It would be our hope this would provide greater diversity of perspectives that is more representative of the community at large than would otherwise be presented. Staff are also interested in exploring ways diversity, including geographic knowledge, can be further enhanced.*

## Summary of the Staff Preferred Public Review Program Package

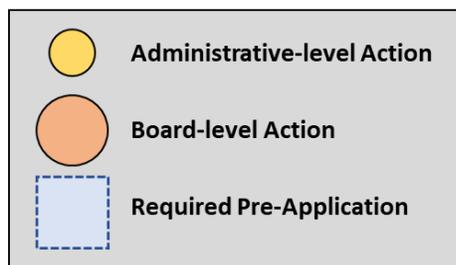
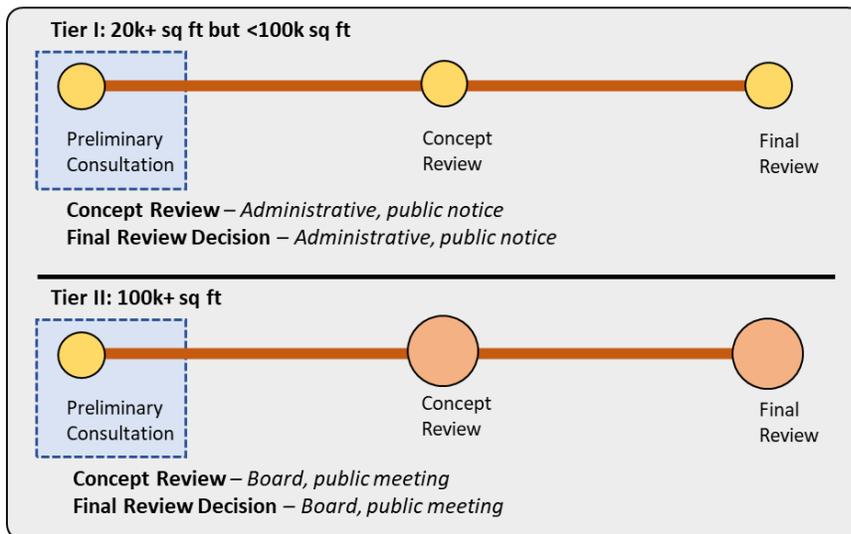
As described above, staff presents the following program structure for the Public Review draft.

### Required Urban Design Review Thresholds & Review Processes

#### Neighborhood MUC



#### Downtown, Tacoma Mall & Crossroads MUCs



## Urban Design Review Board Composition

7 Members

### Design & Development Professionals

4 Members

- Architect
- Landscape Architect
- Urban Designer/Planner
- Engineer
- Construction

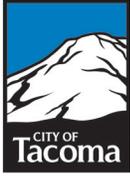
\* 2 maximum from any one discipline

### Urban Design Priorities

3 Members

- Active Transportation
- Sustainable Development/Green Building
- Culture/Heritage/History

\* 1 from each priority area



**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Wesley Rhodes, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan and EIS – “Picture Pac Ave”  
**Memo Date:** January 11, 2023  
**Meeting Date:** January 18, 2023

**Action Requested:**  
Comment and direction on key Project Goals via a workshop.

**Discussion:**  
Staff recently finalized a contract for consultant services to assist the City in drafting a Subarea Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for an approximately 4.5-mile-long portion of Pacific Avenue/State Route 7 (SR 7) (approximately, I-5 to south 96<sup>th</sup> Street) along a proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor.

Staff has met with the Commission two previous times for this project:

- June 15, 2022 - Staff presented an overview of the Picture Pac Ave project background, major project elements, and a general timeline.
- November 16, 2022 - Staff presented updates on the feedback received to date as part of the “soft launch” engagement process, formation of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC), and project timeline. The Commission also took an action to appoint Commissioner Torrez to represent the Commission of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC).

At the January 18, 2023, meeting staff will engage the Commission in an interactive charette-style workshop with activities designed to elicit feedback and direction on key Project Goals and priorities.

**Project Summary:**  
The “Picture Pac Ave” subarea planning process is intended to create a shared long-term vision and more coordinated approach to development, environmental review, and strategic capital investments along Pacific Avenue. Completion of the subarea plan will help leverage the benefits of planned transit improvements and support the ongoing eligibility for, and prioritization of, funding for capital investments.

In recognition of the significance of Pacific Avenue as Pierce County’s first Bus-Rapid Transit (BRT) line, the City of Tacoma, Pierce Transit, and the State Department of Commerce have partnered to fund and develop a Pacific Avenue Subarea Plan for adoption by the City of Tacoma as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

**Staff Contact:**

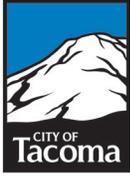
- Wesley Rhodes, Senior Planner, [wrhodes@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:wrhodes@cityoftacoma.org), (253) 208-0083
- Project webpage: [www.cityoftacoma.org/PicturePacAve](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/PicturePacAve)

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1: Workshop Outline

c. Peter Huffman, Director





## Workshop Outline:

At the January 18, 2023 Planning Commission meeting staff will engage the Commission in an interactive charette-style workshop with activities designed to elicit feedback and direction on key Project Goals and priorities.

The workshop is planned to be conducted as two primary activities:

1. Project Goals – Assets & Challenges/Opportunities Exercise
2. Project Goals – Mapping Exercise

### Project Goals – Assets & Challenges/Opportunities Exercise

This activity will engage Commissioners around identified key Project Goals. These Project Goals have been developed through outreach conducted as part of the “soft launch” phase of the project during the summer, fall, and winter of 2022. It includes direction from City Council, multiple City Commissions (including the Planning Commission) and conversations with key community-based organizations and stakeholders with an interest in the Pacific Avenue Corridor.

The identified key Project Goals include:

1. Encourage equitable transit-oriented development
  - a. Mixture of housing-types (including affordable housing)
  - b. Anti-displacement strategies
2. Improve mobility, accessibility, and connectivity
3. Evaluate community needs such as parks, amenities, and infrastructure
4. Promote climate sustainability and resilience

Staff will guide Commissioners through an interactive activity to identify key assets, as well as challenges or opportunities for each of these key Project Goals. The Commission will also get an opportunity to identify additional Project Goals.

### Project Goals – Mapping Exercise

As an extension of the Assets & Challenges/Opportunities exercise, there will be a second mapping activity. During this activity Commissioners will have an opportunity to add a geospatial component to important assets, challenges and opportunities identified as part of the first exercise. Adding the geospatial component, along with reference maps, may help to facilitate more detailed discussions around topics such as zoning, key cultural or other assets and amenities, and infrastructure and connectivity to planned BRT stations. Additionally, the use of a map may spark additional conversation around important elements of the planning process, including engagement.

\*A modified virtual/hybrid version of this workshop will also be conducted with the Project Advisory Committee, currently being formed.





**TO:** Mayor Victoria Woodards and the Tacoma City Council  
**FROM:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**SUBJECT:** **Status and Future of the Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG)**  
**DATE:** December 27, 2022

This memo is in response to the City Council’s Resolution No. 40889, adopted on December 14, 2021, which extended the operation of the Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Group (TODAG) through the end of 2022 and requested the City Manager to develop recommendations for the potential continuation of TODAG in 2023 and beyond. This memo transmits the TODAG’s recommendations to the City Manager concerning the “new TODAG” and the City Manager’s recommendations to the City Council.

**Background**

The TODAG is a citizen-based advisory group established by the City Council per [Resolution No. 40303](#) of April 16, 2019, to help inform the design and development of significant transit projects throughout the City including the Dome District, one of the region’s most transit-rich areas. The TODAG was assigned to review and make appropriate recommendations on the following three major projects: Sound Transit's Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE), Pierce Transit's Pacific Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, and the City's Puyallup Avenue Transit/Complete Streets Improvement Project.

Resolution No. 40303 assumed an operating schedule of 24–30 months for the TODAG as a “pilot program,” but did not provide a specific sunset clause. It was not clear if the TODAG shall continue to operate upon the scheduled conclusion in October/November 2021. On December 14, 2021, the City Council adopted [Resolution No. 40889](#) directing the City Manager to take the following actions:

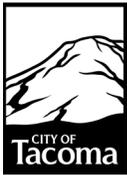
1. Extend the TODAG’s operation through December 31, 2022;
2. Develop recommendations as to whether the TODAG should be made a permanent advisory group, and if so, what its scope of work, membership and other relevant operating parameters should be; and
3. Fill all vacant positions of the TODAG in 2022 with the intent to add diversity and enhance equity in the current membership.

**TODAG’s Recommendations**

Attached is the Issue Paper, titled “Reshaping and Rescoping the TODAG,” developed by the TODAG and finalized on October 24, 2022. As documented in the Issue Paper, the TODAG evaluated five potential options for how the TODAG could be reshaped and identified the following two options as its primary recommendations to the City Manager:

- Option C – Joint Subcommittee (of Planning and Transportation Commissions).
- Option E – Permanent Advisory Group (City Manager appointed).

The TODAG also recommended that, regardless of whichever "reshaping" option is chosen, the scope of work for the “new TDOAG” should be expanded to citywide TOD projects, its membership should be fairly representative of the community and relevant fields of expertise, and it must be supported with adequate level of funding and staffing resources.



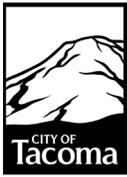
### **City Manager's Report and Recommendations**

The first action requested by the City Council, per Resolution No. 40303, was to extend the TODAG's operation through the end of 2022. I am happy to report that the TODAG did conduct five bi-monthly meetings in 2022. They reviewed and commented on the TDLE and BRT projects, and developed the attached Issue Paper.

The third action requested by the City Council was to fill all vacant positions of the TODAG in 2022 with the intent to add diversity and enhance equity in the current membership. Staff established initial contacts with numerous individuals interested in filling the vacant seats of "Pacific Avenue Corridor Businesses and/or Residents," "Hilltop," and "East Tacoma," but was not able to solidify commitment from those individuals. Staff found that it was particularly challenging to get new individuals to commit to join the group after it had completed so much of its original charge and with the limited time left before the group's current timetable concluded.

Pertaining to the second request of the City Council to develop recommendations concerning the "new TODAG," I would respectfully submit the following thoughts:

- Upon careful review of the TODAG's Issue Paper, input from the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission, and consultation with some Council Members and my staff, I have come to the conclusion that the concept of increased coordination between the Planning Commission (PC) and the Transportation Commission (TC), through a joint subcommittee (or similar structure), is the most effective, efficient and feasible format for carrying on the duties and responsibilities of the TODAG regarding citywide policy-level issues around transit-oriented development and meeting the needs of the community, the City Council and the accountable City departments.
- The budgetary constraints make it challenging to provide appropriate staffing support for Citizen's Committees, Boards, and Commissions (CBCs). Instead of creating a new CBC, it would be more efficient and feasible to establish a joint subcommittee, task force or work group within the organizational structures of existing CBCs.
- The City Council may direct the PC and the TC to establish the membership, assignments and expected outcomes of the subcommittee. I will make sure appropriate staffing support for the subcommittee is provided.
- A PC/TC joint subcommittee provides a unique opportunity to institutionalize and further enhance the coordination and collaboration between the PC and the TC and between the supporting departments.
- A PC/TC subcommittee provides a platform that can streamline the presentation and outreach process for the agencies working on the TDLE, BRT and Puyallup Avenue Project; for example, they don't need to repeat the same presentations to the PC, the TC and the "new TODAG." The joint subcommittee can also more effectively consolidate comments and recommendations from the PC and the TC on these projects and present them to the City Council in a coordinated and cohesive manner.
- A PC/TC subcommittee can also be assigned to work on other issues of common interest to the PC and the TC, such as the Impact Fees Study, the Transportation Master Plan Update, and the continued development of TOD related policies, programs, and review guidelines. Another great opportunity for the subcommittee to weigh in is the upcoming State mandated 2024 Periodic



Update of the Comprehensive Plan that requires close collaboration between the PC and the TC and among several City departments.

- The subcommittee should be operating on an ad-hoc, as needed basis, and its effectiveness subject to periodic assessments by the PC and the TC.
- With regards to specific transit, infrastructure and planning projects, where the direct, focused input of local residents, businesses, key agencies and partners is needed, I feel that it is most effective to continue utilizing project-specific advisory committees where appropriate. Different than the policy-level scope of the PC/TC subcommittee discussed above, this project-level advisory approach allows the local individuals most directly impacted to be engaged on those particular projects, with a focus on the critical early planning and conceptual project design phases. With support from departments including Planning & Development Services and Public Works, this model has been used successfully in the past, such as with the Amtrak Station Citizen Advisory Committee, and continues to be used for key projects, such as the Pacific Avenue Corridor Subarea Plan (“Picture Pac Ave”).

#### Next Steps

If the City Council concurs with my recommendations, we will prepare a resolution for the Council’s consideration within the next few weeks.

#### Attachment:

1. Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Group Report - “Reshaping and Rescoping the TODAG” (October 24, 2022)