



## **Public Comments**

**Meeting:** Wednesday, February 2, 2022

**Submittal:** Written comments only; e-mailed received at [planning@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:planning@cityoftacoma.org) by 12:00 noon, on the meeting day

**Subjects:** Comments are addressing the following Discussion Item on the agenda:

**#3 – Home In Tacoma Phase 2**

**No. of  
Comments:** 3



**From:** [Kit Burns](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comments - Home in Tacoma Phase 2 - Feb 2, 2222  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 2, 2022 11:53:21 AM

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Dear Planning Commission:

I have reviewed your documents for today's meeting of the Planning Commission.

As an Architect, this document appears to be far from complete. The issues are significant and require public input, not just the appearance of input.

The broad obliteration of single family housing without regard to the many factors for a liveable City is unacceptable.

Based on what is proposed a developer can have free range to loot and pillage the city with housing dropped in wherever they want.

No protections of past development plans and no Master Plan Vision for the future of the City.

Changes are needed to our Codes but this is far too broad and fails to thoughtfully address necessary requirements for a liveable city.

Developers prefer that there are no regulations. Regulations are Protections of the Public Interest.

In the report it is not clear how this will be tied to transportation. I see no requirements to contribute for a livable city for parks and recreation.

There are no design requirements to prevent lowballing the costs of a development. We can build instant slums if we aren't careful.

Saying "accessible" and "affordable" isn't providing what we need. Without additional review and citizen discussion it is necessary to pause this proposal.

It affects everyone in the City.

There needs to be information on all properties in the City that aren't currently developed.

I have been in Tacoma since 1970. What is planned for all the empty lots downtown? And the many lots around the City.

We have a great deal of land available. Or is it like the game of monopoly? We have no access to it as someone back East owns it and is busy on other things? Each parcel needs to be evaluated.

A presentation to the Citizens must be made so that we can see the future vision of City Developments.

I look forward to reviewing a complete Master Plan of the City when it's ready.

This is not ready.

Sincerely,

Kit Burns

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1010 6th Avenue  
Tacoma, WA 98405

... "the world reveals itself to those who travel on foot" . . . .

**From:** [Nathan Schumer](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Subject:** Tacoma DSA Housing Justice working group testimony  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 2, 2022 11:55:59 AM  
**Attachments:** [HIT TDSA Housing Justice letter.docx](#)

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Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

Please find attached our suggestions for what topics to consider during the Home in Tacoma Phase 2 discussions, as well as specific resources and contacts for many of these topics.

Best,

The Tacoma DSA Housing Justice Working Group

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

As part of the Phase 2 project of Home in Tacoma, we have recommendations centered around the sustainability, affordability, and anti-displacement policy goals. Our recommendations for study and scope are as follows:

- 1) Sustainability
  - a. Study implementing a natural gas hookup ban; look at cities that have implemented this ban and the cost and health impacts in particular
  - b. Consider the health impacts of natural gas in housing, as per the Rocky Mountain Institute Report <https://rmi.org/insight/gas-stoves-pollution-health/>
  - c. Green building standards and potential costs associated with them, such as passive solar and geothermal heating, green roofs, low carbon and recycled building materials, and photovoltaic and micro wind systems.
  - d. Ecological landscaping practices. Mandating the incorporation of native plant species for insects and birds (native first approach to landscaping). Discouraging mowing and leaf blowing. Discourage excess concrete.
  - e. Zoning incentives for dense walkable communities, particularly revise and revisit Tacoma's very outdated parking mandates. Investigate an option for developers to pay into a transit access fund rather than add additional parking.
- 2) Affordability
  - a. Study the implementation of an inclusionary zoning policy set at 25% of units (or equivalent fees)—Seattle being the obvious model.
  - b. Target inclusionary zoning at the appropriate levels and amounts of housing, while acknowledging that new single family housing is essentially luxury housing, given housing prices in the city, and thus, should probably pay in to the fund.
  - c. Consider the interaction of such a policy with the current 12 year MFTE.
  - d. Study the use of density bonuses, and have them focus on affordable housing and anti-displacement.
  - e. Given the real dearth of affordable housing at all levels, study the possibility of implementing a social housing developer through the Tacoma Housing Authority, and consider looking to Montgomery County, MD as a model.
    - i. Find a non-income restricted revenue source for funding this housing (possibly by supplanting some of the current money used for human services or affordable housing).
    - ii. We also suggest discussion with Paul Elliott Williams, a fellow at the Jain Family Institute, who is an expert in developing social housing.

- f. Homeowners and small developers need access to the financing necessary to build new infill housing.
- g. Incentivize lenders to expand lending to low-income communities and communities of color through the Community Reinvestment Act.
- h. Consider renovation and construction financing only with a general contractor, without relying on consultants to lower the oversight costs.
- i. Simplify permitting and monitoring processes to lower costs.

<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/californias-new-zoning-law-eases-building-restrictions-depends-financing-industry-play-its-part>

### 3) Anti-Displacement.

- a. No single policy can effectively address gentrification and displacement of city residents. The city must adopt a comprehensive renters bill of rights to ensure household and community stability.

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/19RD018%2520-%2520Anti-Displacement%2520Strategy%2520Effectiveness.pdf%237&ved=2ahUKEwiCg\\_m-3-H1AhVyLH0KHX6cBzUQFnoECAoQBg&usq=AOvVaw0uLoAeeNjyC1qBk2Gx70mP](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/19RD018%2520-%2520Anti-Displacement%2520Strategy%2520Effectiveness.pdf%237&ved=2ahUKEwiCg_m-3-H1AhVyLH0KHX6cBzUQFnoECAoQBg&usq=AOvVaw0uLoAeeNjyC1qBk2Gx70mP)

- b. To address the issue of displacement and housing instability the city should study and adopt a comprehensive strategy. The city must work intentionally to anchor the health, safety and economic opportunity of every household in stable housing conditions.
- c. Provide renters the opportunity to purchase their home: secure a right of first refusal for tenants, and utilize the affordable housing fund to bond purchases. The city's Affordable Housing Trust-fund and bonding capacity should be made available to tenants who vote to integrate into the City's Social Housing Developer program.  
[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2020/20200213/20200213\\_PHED4.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwjo9dy11eH1AhXFGjQIHdB0ABkQFnoECAUQAQ&usq=AOvVaw0d685r6ObZQA-hp5URG0dF](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2020/20200213/20200213_PHED4.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwjo9dy11eH1AhXFGjQIHdB0ABkQFnoECAUQAQ&usq=AOvVaw0d685r6ObZQA-hp5URG0dF)
- d. We need rent control! The City Council should pass a resolution to implement robust rent control as soon as the state ban is lifted in the legislature (see St. Paul, MN, 2021 rent control policy as a good model).  
<https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/21045803/proposed-saint-paul-ord.pdf>
  - i. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0094119006000635>
- e. No rent hikes until all housing code violations are fixed.

- f. Expand relocation assistance to include assistance due to economic evictions (rent hikes that force tenants to move)
- g. Correct relocation assistance policy to include households up to 80% AMI
  - i. [https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city\\_departments/equity\\_and\\_human\\_rights/rental\\_housing\\_code/relocation](https://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/equity_and_human_rights/rental_housing_code/relocation)
- h. Just Cause eviction protections
  - i. <https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/FederalWay/html/FederalWay20/FederalWay2005.html#:~:text=040%20Prohibiting%20evictions%20based%20upon,discrimination%20in%20lease%20renewal%20actions>.
- i. No winter evictions, or evictions of children (or teachers) during the school year
  - i. <http://seattle.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4916892&GUID=E83387A0-517B-4171-BB7E-43AF55BE3FFB>
- j. No eviction for first year of lease, even if missed payment
  - i. 90 Day Notice for No Cause Eviction
  - ii. Provide households suitable 180 day notice of any recurring housing cost increase.
    - 1. <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1904&Year=2021&Initiative=false>
  - iii. Breakout parking charges from rent
    - 1. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-09-20/how-to-reform-your-city-s-bad-parking-requirements>
    - 2. <https://usa.streetsblog.org/2018/04/03/landlords-in-seattle-cant-force-renters-to-pay-for-parking-anymore/>
    - 3. [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SDCI/Codes/ChangesToCodes/NeighborhoodParking/NeighborhoodParkingMayorRecommendOrdinance.pdf&ved=2ahUKewjXscPa2uH1AhVGGDQIHSDlCOsQFnoECACQAQ&usq=AOvVaw0rOSLB\\_gkyvSWH51dOqian](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SDCI/Codes/ChangesToCodes/NeighborhoodParking/NeighborhoodParkingMayorRecommendOrdinance.pdf&ved=2ahUKewjXscPa2uH1AhVGGDQIHSDlCOsQFnoECACQAQ&usq=AOvVaw0rOSLB_gkyvSWH51dOqian)
- k. Revolving fund for rental, foreclosure assistance
- l. No more stolen security deposits. Actually enforce fair housing laws, anti-discrimination laws, and housing code violations.
  - i. [https://montgomerycountymd.gov/DHCA/housing/landlordtenant/security\\_deposits.html](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/DHCA/housing/landlordtenant/security_deposits.html)
- m. Robust and comprehensive landlord reporting requirements and staffing for inspections, funded by a fee levied on all landlords, based on the number of units they have
  - i. The city needs metrics here like average rent per landlord size, amenities, and building type, # of evictions, # of applicants per vacancy, average upkeep costs, so we can start doing better policy

- n. Make it easier to find housing—let’s cap rental fees, ban discrimination against renters, and cap rental income requirements. The city should help people find new housing, assist with rents, and provide foreclosure
  - i. <https://thedoctorweighsin.com/rental-application-fees-poverty/>
  - ii. <https://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/civil-rights/fair-housing/fair-chance-housing>
- o. Provide renters suitable notice of rent hikes.
  - i. <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billssummary?BillNumber=1904&Year=2021&Initiative=false>

Thank you for considering our input. We have broken out resources that inform our thinking as well as topics that we think that the Planning Commission should study. The Tacoma DSA Housing Justice Working Group is a subgroup of Tacoma DSA, a socialist member organization with over 600 members, mostly in Tacoma, and also reflects extensive consultation with housing justice and environmental groups throughout the Tacoma area. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to a continuing dialogue.

Tacoma DSA Housing Justice Committee

**From:** [Esther Day](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Cc:** [Ushka, Catherine](#); [Woodards, Victoria](#); [Hines, John](#); [McCarthy, Conor](#); [Rumbaugh, Sarah](#); [Blocker, Keith](#); [Bushnell, Joe](#); [Walker, Kristina](#); [Daniels, Kiara](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Home In Tacoma - Midscale is NOT GOOD FOR TACOMA - WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
**Date:** Monday, February 7, 2022 1:37:51 PM  
**Attachments:** [Sewage Issues.docx](#)

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Dear Planning Department,

I am resubmitting this information that was sent to the City Clerk and the Council, and addressed to the City Clerk for forwarding to the Planning Department.

I was just provided this information and am forwarding it to you for consideration as it was submitted long before 12pm deadline.

Sincerely,  
Esther Day

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**From:** Esther Day  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 2, 2022 10:57 AM  
**To:** [cityclerk@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:cityclerk@cityoftacoma.org)  
**Cc:** Ushka, Catherine <[cushka@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:cushka@cityoftacoma.org)>; [victoria.woodards@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:victoria.woodards@cityoftacoma.org); [srumbaugh@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:srumbaugh@cityoftacoma.org); [jbushnell2@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:jbushnell2@cityoftacoma.org); [kdaniels@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:kdaniels@cityoftacoma.org); [kristina.walker@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:kristina.walker@cityoftacoma.org); [conor.mccarthy@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:conor.mccarthy@cityoftacoma.org); [catherine.ushka@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:catherine.ushka@cityoftacoma.org); [john.hines@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:john.hines@cityoftacoma.org); [keith.blocker@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:keith.blocker@cityoftacoma.org)  
**Subject:** Home In Tacoma - Midscale is NOT GOOD FOR TACOMA - WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Dear Planning Commission Members,

It is important that our Planning Commission and City Council be aware of the issues that no one seems to be checking or making sure they are dealt with before we increase Non-Affordable Housing.

I ask that you all, PLEASE, take the time to read each article and each line and check out the photos of evidence to what I am saying.

### **PLEASE PROTECT OUR TREES**

Please SAVE OUR TREE CANOPIES – they clean our air and provide heat protection. Stop the plan to remove the trees on Union Avenue. There is wildlife that lives around that area. Deer are seen frequently.

Not only that, it is important to note that the land under that grass and trees is contaminated from the ASARCO plume. It is reported that the plume from Asarco traveled 1,000 miles to the base of Mt. Rainier. The city's plans to pull up the trees and use the esplanade for infrastructure. We have niches of habitat in our City that make Tacoma what it is. Don't destroy it – work to preserve and defend for future generations. The city should study it work process to ensure protection of our tree canopies and current wildlife habitat – before they disappear forever.

[Habitat Loss | National Wildlife Federation \(nwf.org\)](#)

See what Seattle is finding they need to do to protect their tree canopy and we should do likewise.

Let's not make our City a Seattle – let's not duplicate the scene from the movie **Soylent Green** where they did not grow anything because land was not available to grow anything - it was all gone because of the concrete jungle. **Check it out.** Our future generations need **YOU** to leave them a good legacy. Clean water, clean air, the ability to grow things in their own gardens. Please check out these articles.

[Seattle's trees: 'In the headlights of development' | The Seattle Times](#)

[City Hall must take action on protecting Seattle's trees | The Seattle Times](#)

## DEVELOPER'S DREAM – HOME IN TACOMA

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/a-developers-dream/>

Here is a small gist of what is being reported:

[Legislature should reject plan to upend single-family zoning | The Seattle Times](#)

“As we have seen, if you simply say we are going to build 3, 4, 5, 6 units per lot, the next 1,000 and 2,000 units that are built will not be affordable-housing units,” said Rep. Gerry Pollet, D-North Seattle, during a legislative hearing on Jan. 18.

Less than three years ago, Mayor Jenny Durkan signed legislation authorizing citywide implementation of Mandatory Housing Affordability into law. Among other changes, it required that new development include rent-restricted affordable homes or contribute to a city fund for affordable housing.

The results have been mixed, but illustrative. Given the choice of building affordable housing or paying a fee, the vast majority of developers pay the fee.

Among the 224 market-rate projects that were subject to MHA's requirements in 2020, 219 chose to pay fees, while only five agreed to include some affordable housing, yielding 21 on-site units. The program raised \$68 million in fees."

## **INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES**

Please take a moment to consider how bad our infrastructure is. We keep having sewage spills and they are serious because they impact our bay.

1. Health Department issued a sewage spill advisory:  
<https://www.tpchd.org/Home/Components/News/News/285/286>
2. Health Department issued a sewage spill advisory:  
[Health Department Issues a Sewage Spill Advisory for Flett Creek Basin and Flett Creek | Health Department News | Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department \(tpchd.org\)](#)
3. Check out the advisories from the Tacoma Pierce County Health Dept as it relates to Commencement Bay and other advisories:  
[Current Surface Water Advisories | Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department \(tpchd.org\)](#)

As for where the water goes, a survey conducted by the Water Research Foundation revealed that toilets use 24 percent of the 300 gallons of water used per day by the average American family, 20 percent is used for baths and showers, 19 percent is from the faucet, 17 percent is used to operate washing machines and dishwashers, 8 percent is used for various activities, and a staggering 12 percent is from water leakage. Now, imagine the development you are considering for our city - 300 gal per day per household. 100 houses would be 30,000 gal per day, 1000 houses would be 3 hundred thousand gallons per day.

NOTE: Commencement Bay is federally designated as a Dead Zone. The Puyallup River is adding to the contamination. Check out the drainage from the river. NOTE: Puyallup, Sumner, Orting and Tacoma spill sewage CHECK IT OUT YOURSELVES. The Tehela community above Sumner has approximately 1000 homes and, if reports are correct, they have no sewage treatment plant – Sumner reportedly told them they could not help them as they were at or near capacity themselves.

See attached photos and you can see the brown water coming from the Puyallup River to Commencement Bay.

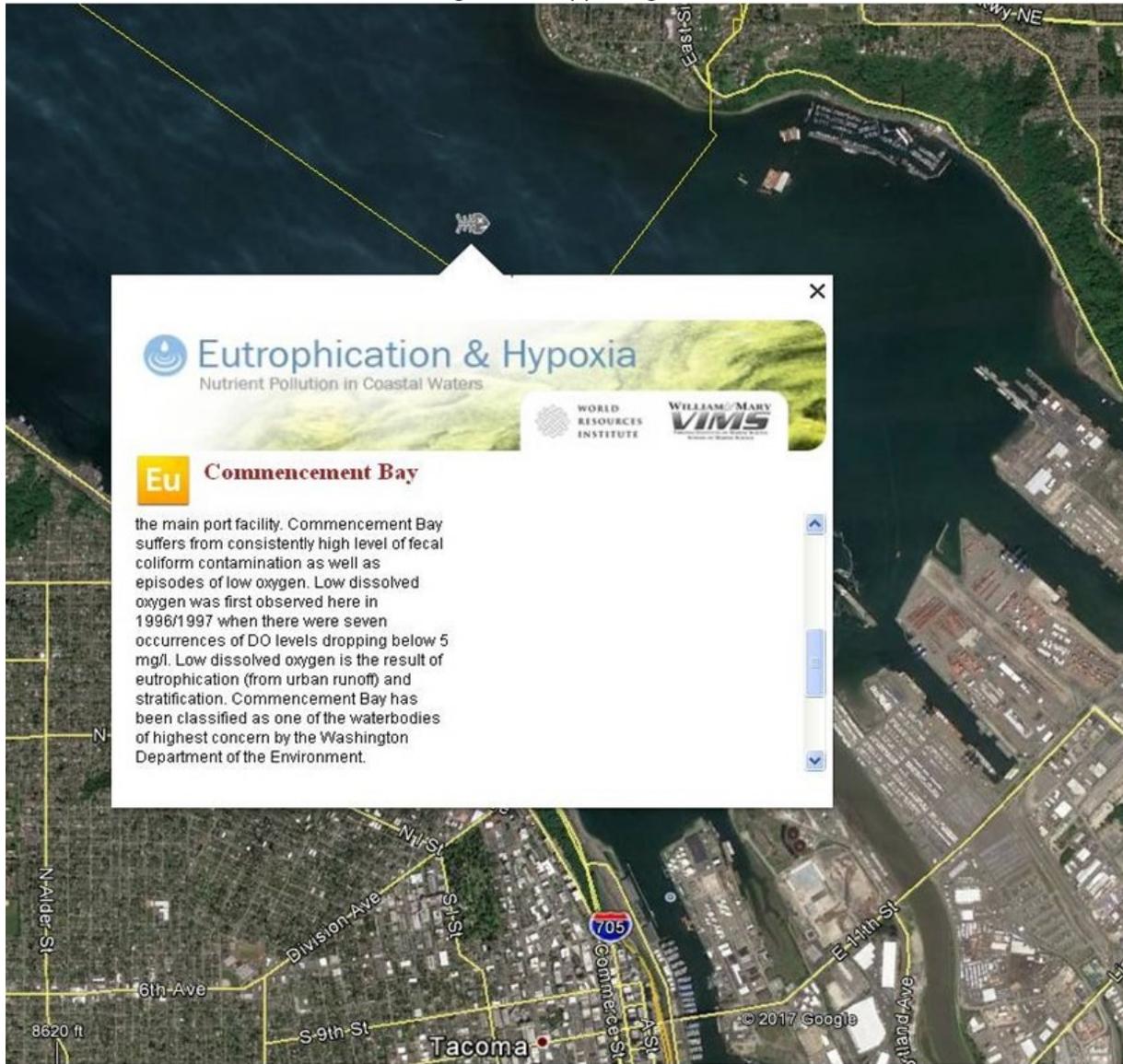
The Science is there, if you just take the time to check it out before we destroy our city and our ability to live here.

Sincerely,

Esther Day  
Former Planning Commissioner

Tacoma Sewage Plant along the Puyallup River – Orting, Sumner and Puyallup all drain sewage into this river and through to Commencement Bay. Hence, Commencement Bay is a Federally Recognized Dead Zone. Check out the Health Department’s Warning about not eating the fish.

Anticipate the Federal Government will come to areas like ours to enforce cleaner water to preserve our fish and wildlife because of Climate Change. It is happening.



Tacoma Sewage Plant along the Puyallup River – Orting, Sumner and Puyallup all drain sewage into this river and through to Commencement Bay. Hence, Commencement Bay is a Federally Recognized Dead Zone. Check out the Health Department’s Warning about not eating the fish.

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