



## Public Comments

**Meeting:** Wednesday, September 6, 2023

**Submittal:** Written comments 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(s) on the agenda:

### **F3 – Home In Tacoma Project – Phase 2**

**No. of  
Comments:** Five



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¿Necesitas información en español? Cần thông tin bằng tiếng Việt? 한국어로 정보가 필요하십니까? ត្រូវការព័ត៌មានជាភាសាខ្មែរ?

Нужна информация на усском? Потрібна інформація українською мовою? Contact **TacomaFIRST 311** at (253) 591-5000.



**From:** [Mary Ann Clabaugh](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Subject:** Midscale Development  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 5, 2023 8:35:19 PM

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Can't believe I am having to write again, and that this insanity is continuing to move forward. I know I don't have to list all of the cons on this, and there really are no pros to this. And why is this all being done without the citizens having any say or vote regarding this project? I thought our elected officials were working for us, the people? The conflict of interest with this entire project, the members of our council who are also affiliated with Sound Transit, etc. HOW is this being allowed to continue????  
PLEASE stop this insanity now, and do what's right for the benefit of the City of Tacoma, and not a few small percentage.

Thank you for listening, and hopefully, doing the right thing.

Mary Ann & David Clabaugh  
6726 No. 28th ST.  
Tacoma, WA 98407  
253-861-9516

**From:** [J Corso](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Cc:** [Woodards, Victoria](#); [City Manager](#); [City Clerk's Office](#); [Walker, Kristina](#); [Diaz, Olgy](#); [Rumbaugh, Sarah](#); [Daniels, Kiara](#); [Barnett, Elliott](#)  
**Subject:** Sept 6th Planning Commission Meeting: Home in Tacoma: Phase 2  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 6, 2023 11:51:44 AM

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Dear Planning Commissioners,

Thank you very much for your service to the City of Tacoma.

Clearly, it's important to plan for growth, and I have a couple of concerns and recommendations for improving the plan.

First, regarding HiT outreach, I continue to be disappointed that the city continues to disregard a provision in the Growth Management Act requiring the Responsible Official (RO) to be present for the specific purpose of documenting resident questions and concerns, researching them, and performing the role of resident advocate during the planning process. This year, I've attended two NENC meetings where the main program was HiT, and I attended the HiT open house at Mason Middle School, and the RO was not present at any of these outreach events. How can the RO do his job, in compliance with the GMA, when he's not present at the HiT outreach meetings? Clearly, he isn't doing his job, and Tacoma residents are being denied their right to representation in the planning process. Please make it a priority to improve HiT outreach by advising the City Council to confront the City Manager and RO about this failure to comply with the GMA.

Second, in the past, I've been very disappointed in how the City of Tacoma has been administering the bonus program. It's my opinion that the city has been giving real estate investors and developers too many benefits in exchange for too little public benefit. However, looking through the agenda packet, I was pleasantly surprised to find significant changes to the bonus program that I might be able to support depending on the details. Clearly, efforts to minimize the displacement of Tacoma residents and the amount of building materials hauled to the dump to decompose and release their carbon into the environment have the potential to provide public benefit. Please consider adding a third option to the bonus program, encouraging real estate developers to build dwelling units that will be sold to the residents that occupy them. According to the 2020 Census, only 52% of Tacomans own their home and are building generational wealth through real estate. Currently, the HiT Project appears to be promoting the building of dwelling units for rent. In my neighborhood, there are blocks where the owner occupancy rate is approximately 1%, and HiT appear to be making it even more difficult for Tacomans to purchase their housing. Please consider encouraging the building of owner-occupied dwelling units to the bonus program.

Sincerely,  
John Geoffrey Corso  
701 N J St, Tacoma

**From:** [Esther Day](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Cc:** [Woodards, Victoria](#); [Ushka, Catherine](#); [Hines, John](#); [Bushnell, Joe](#); [Rumbaugh, Sarah](#); [Walker, Kristina](#); [Diaz, Oly](#); [Blocker, Keith](#); [Daniels, Kiara](#); [City Clerk's Office](#)  
**Subject:** HIT 2  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 6, 2023 8:30:45 AM  
**Attachments:** [Ask MRSC Transit April 2022.msg](#)  
[Boudet saying no need for MIDSCALE.docx](#)

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Dear Planning Commission, City Council, City Clerk, City Manager, and Planning Department,

The Home In Tacoma contains development of the Midscale along transit corridors. This plan is nothing more than pandering to Transit and doing as it REQUIRES OF YOU as members of their boards. See Newsletter by MRSC in April of 2022.

We do not need Midscale! We need to keep land open for businesses to move to locations that they can build on these roads. We DON'T WANT TO BE A BEDROOM COMMUNITY TO SEATTLE.

An important issue is that Pacific Avenue is highly used by JBLM. You can frequently see long lines of military vehicles with men on board coming from JBLM area and traveling all the way to S. 38<sup>th</sup>.

Recently, when the Governor and the Legislature were working on rezoning our entire state, I asked my council representative to get rid of Midscale as it was NOT necessary. I personally asked my councilwoman to stop this Midscale in our area and she indicated that if we did not do it, the governor would. **Well, HE DID NOT REZONE ANY MIDSCALE ANYWHERE IN THE STATE.**

Our City Council was told by Brian Boudet, in a presentation, that Midscale WAS NOT NEEDED – yet you still did it.

This is what transit wants to generate customers for their transit. This system did not exist for the 16 years I took transit to and from Seattle. It is not needed now. People will use the bus when needed.

The problem with Midscale is that it is planned to be built with no parking. This is laughable. People will have cars because they NEED

THEM. This will cause neighbors to fight for space on the street. People, many elderly, parking several streets away from their homes because the street in front of their homes is occupied by the renters in the Midscale. **IT WILL AND DOES HAPPEN.**

The other important item of concern is the development of 8plexes and other high density housing in our small neighborhoods. Our infrastructure – sewer and water pipes are not new. Those units require better systems that will attach to our smaller and much older lines and thus create issues to existing homeowners. Sixplexes will be bad enough.

A friend reported that she had 5 townhomes built in her neighborhood. The developers did not put in 10' wide garage doors on the units, NO, they put 8' wide garage doors. As a result folks are parking on the street because the doors are too small. That has added 13 cars in their small neighborhood. They have parking issues with these people parking and blocking areas.

Another bad part, basements are being flooded and water faucets coming on at certain times at night. When those townhomes are using water for washing clothes, dishes and bathing – it is higher pressure going into their newer pipes, but flowing to smaller and older piping that is causing a lot of pressure. **WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR THAT?**

The City is not charging an IMPACT FEE. We tax payers are being saddled with the costs and giving away tax exemptions – while we **PROPERTY OWNERS** are paying the price for developers.

Stop this insanity and lower the development in duplex size. **DO NOT BUILD MIDSCALE.**

We are losing businesses because of the crime issue.

Well, get ready because we are going to have a lot more problems if you have not been watching scientific information about our water glaciers on Mt. Rainer. We lost 4 big ones that provide water runoff that feeds into Green River. The massive development that this state is

going through between King and Pierce County is disgusting and much of it from Kent to here is draining Green River.

Last summer, during the 4 REALLY HOT DAYS, Eatonville water ran out. The State of Washington was in drought. Yet, if you have no real, experienced, scientific people on staff to give you an honest evaluation of the water situation – which our Tacoma Water does not!, then we are in trouble.

We don't have qualified scientists on staff at the city, the county or the health department.

For that matter, I hear that we DON'T EVEN HAVE SUFFICIENT INSPECTORS to handle all this construction. So, guess what? You may have a badly built apartment house built next to your home. Then you will find out what I've been talking about. It will be too late then – if they have a fire and the sprinklers don't come on.

Wake Up City Council and Commission. This is happening.

Stop this insanity and don't get carried away developing.

The Governor did not build Midscale! Please also do not build 8plexes (that is midscale in a different form).

**MAKE developers pay impact fees.** Our police are doing the best they can, but crime is high and will continue.

Make Developers pay for Impact Fees and make sure that Police and Fire are added. Developers add more people, more crime, more fire potential.

**WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH WATER FOR ALL THIS DEVELOPMENT.**

REMEMBER THAT and DO YOUR OWN SCIENTIFID RESEARCH.

Regards,

Esther Day  
Former Tacoma Planning Commissioner



**From:** [Ask MRSC – Transit](#)  
**To:** [Esther Day](#)  
**Subject:** Ask MRSC Transit: April 2022  
**Date:** Friday, April 22, 2022 11:00:35 AM



April 2022



## In This Issue

**Are face coverings still required on transit?**

**Is there an RCW or federal clause limiting the use of retainage bonds for a construction project when using Federal Funds?**

**How do I balance my role as a city council member or county commissioner/council member with my role as a transit authority board member? What if the best interests of one agency “conflict” with the best interests of the other? Must I seek guidance from my fellow council members before voting?**

**Did the Legislature amend the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) in the last session?**

**Some of our staff members are attending an industry conference. Can they accept a prize awarded by random drawing?**

### Have a question?

Officials and staff from eligible transit agencies can use our free one-on-one inquiry service, Ask MRSC.

[Ask MRSC](#)

### **Are face coverings still required on transit?**

The Federal Transit Administration had extended its requirement for face coverings on public transportation conveyances and hubs through May 3, 2022. However, a federal judge in Florida issued a nationwide order voiding the requirement on April 18, 2022. That order is being appealed. Local agencies still have the authority to require face coverings. Many regional transit agencies have publicly announced that they are no longer requiring masks. But, check with your agency counsel on the most current requirements.

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### **Is there an RCW or federal clause limiting the use of retainage bonds for a construction project when using Federal Funds?**

The agency does not reserve retainage on public improvement contracts funded in whole or in part by federal transportation funds ([RCW 60.28.011\(1\)\(b\)](#)). Claims that would normally be paid for out of retainage under [RCW 39.08.010](#); or under [Titles 50, 51, and 82 RCW](#) are to be paid out of the contract's performance and payment bond. See [Federal Acquisition Regulation Section 28.102](#) for more details about the federal bond requirement and remember that the contract bond must stay in effect until all state requirements have been released.

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### **How do I balance my role as a city council member or county commissioner/council member with my role as a transit authority board member? What if the best interests of one agency "conflict" with the best interests of the other? Must I seek guidance from my fellow council members before voting?**

This question came to MRSC because the transit board was being asked to reduce its tax levy to make room for the use of those funds to build a much-needed mental health facility. This would have the immediate effect of reducing transit operations but would provide a benefit to the community at large.

There is no legally correct answer, but there are a few things to consider. Board members have those positions solely because of their respective city or county position. It is reasonable to assume that each board member will consider the effect of their board vote on their "home" jurisdiction. On the other hand, board members do have a fiduciary responsibility to act in the transit agency's best interests. As an elected official with responsibility for your "home" jurisdiction's budget you already balance competing interests, and this is just another place where you get to exercise your judgment.

As for seeking guidance from your colleagues, there is no statutory requirement that you do so. You were appointed to the transit board and with that appointment comes the authority to make decisions independently. Remember that the council or board can always take a formal position on the proposal regardless of how you vote on the transit board. But you may find it helpful to seek your colleagues' opinions and there is certainly no statute that prohibits you from doing so (of course, you'll remember to comply with the OPMA). As always, check with your agency attorney if you have questions about a specific action.

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### **Did the Legislature amend the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) in the last session?**

Yes, it did. MRSC's Flannery Collins outlines the changes in a [recent blog post](#). As she writes "The most notable change (which is really more of a clarification) is that meetings subject to the OPMA must have a physical location (with a few allowed exceptions). Another significant change is the requirement for public comment at regular meetings where final action is taken." Meeting agendas for regular meetings must be posted online unless the agency:

- Has an aggregate valuation of the property subject to taxation by the district, city, or town of less than \$400,000,000;
- Has a population of under 3,000; and
- Provides confirmation to the state auditor that the cost of posting notices on its website or a shared website would exceed one-tenth of 1% of the local government's budget.

And if you go into executive session, you must include the purpose of the executive session in your meeting notes.

### Some of our staff members are attending an industry conference. Can they accept a prize awarded by random drawing?

Probably. [RCW 42.23.070\(2\)](#) prohibits accepting gifts “for a matter connected with or related to the officer’s services.” The purpose of [RCW 42.23.070\(2\)](#) is to prevent the purchase of influence or special treatment. In most circumstances, that concern likely has no relevance to a random drawing. Also, while state law does not provide an exception for gifts of little or no value, many agencies have adopted “*de minimis*” rules. The logic behind these rules is the assumption that something of low value is presumed to not influence the decision-maker. Also, if all attendees included in the random drawing are automatically entered then there’s a good argument that it’s not a “gift” because the right to participate is included in the registration cost for the conference. Check with your agency’s attorney and review the agency’s policies to see if this is addressed. If not, look at [MRSC’s ethics page](#) for examples. You may want to allow staff to participate in a random drawing unless they are directly involved in a contract or other solicitation with the company providing the prize.

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## Why more space for mid-scale housing?

- Do we need Mid-scale for our required housing growth capacity? *No*
- Home In Tacoma Goal: **Housing supply, choice and affordability**  
*Mid-scale is one of most affordable housing types – particularly when combined with reduced transportation/household costs*



This is what Boudet said when he presented this. It is on tape. Then why do Midscale?

Customers for transit and to hell with homeowners

11/4/2021



## Sustainable Tacoma Commission

June 15th, 2023

Dear Chair Walker and IPS Committee,

The Sustainable Tacoma Commission (STC) has been following the Home in Tacoma Phase 2 process and have some input and feedback that we would like to share with you and the Planning staff and Commission.

First of all, we know that smart growth, through density and housing choices in the city, is a major sustainability and climate strategy.

That said, we also want to get growth right and ensure environmental quality and justice in the city. That means:

1. Increase tree canopy, retain mature trees, and mitigate nearby for those that must come out. We look forward to seeing the analysis later this summer that will recommend a draft tree preservation ordinance for adoption with the other Home in Tacoma policies and codes.
2. Protect natural areas – that means developing the Passive Open Space Overlay and accompanying strategy for key habitat protection investments.
3. Promote priority permitting incentives for green building certified new construction and renovations to staff, customers, and the local building community. This program doesn't work if folks don't know about it before they come with their nearly complete plans.
4. Green building density/height bonuses that are already on the Tacoma municipal code books will most likely not be applicable anymore once the state bonuses are adopted. That means that the current Planned Residential Density (PRD) Built Green requirements will be gone as well as the ADU two-foot height bonus for Built Green. We should retain these bonuses.
5. Promote newly adopted State Building Code Council (SBCC) amendments to the 2021 State Building Code requiring energy efficient electric heat pump equipment for space and water heating for residential and commercial new construction projects (effective November 1, 2023).
  - a. Incorporate similar criteria for low emission buildings like heat pump technology as part of Home in Tacoma requirements, if above state building code amendments are rescinded.
6. Support adaptive reuse and salvage as ways to minimize materials going into the waste stream. Support Tacoma adoption of SBCC construction and demolition material management optional appendices to the 2021 State Building Code.
  - a. Encourage adaptive reuse through bonuses for retention of existing structures while adding more units.

- b. Phase I – salvage assessment and waste diversion report requirements for all demolition permits and new building and major renovation projects
  - c. Phase II – include deconstruction requirements for structures 90 years or older
7. We recommend Low-scale Option B as it provides the most opportunity for affordable housing choice and homes close to transit and other amenities.
8. We think that short term rentals should be evaluated and possibly regulated if they will impact successes of other Home in Tacoma strategies for bringing in more housing for Tacoma.

Additionally, we feel the EIS should evaluate all carbon pollution scenarios and include health impacts.

This is a once in a generation opportunity to set up truly positive neighborhoods for current and future Tacomans. We can't afford to pass up this chance to create healthy and sustainable housing choices and neighborhood design.

Regards,

*Evlondo Cooper III*

Evlondo Cooper, Co-Chair

*Margaret Schwertner*

Margaret Schwertner, Co-Chair  
Sustainable Tacoma Commission

Cc: Elliott Barnett, Senior Planner  
Brian Boudet, Long Range Planning Manager  
Christina Caan, Council Policy Advisor  
Linda Foster, Council Policy Advisor  
Chris Karnes, Chair, Planning Commission  
Kristin Lynett, Sustainability Officer  
James Parvey, Environmental Services Division Manager  
Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
Cathy Satava, Management Fellow IPS Staff Liaison  
Mike Slevin, Environmental Service Department Director  
Alyssa Torres, Senior Planner



**From:** [Cathie Raine](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Cc:** [Huffman, Peter](#)  
**Subject:** Apartment buildings construction in South Tacoma  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 19, 2023 11:40:31 AM

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Dear Commissioners,

I have been following the progress with the 'Home in Tacoma-Phase 2" planning process and discussing the specific details of these plans with the Planners as well at the neighborhood 'open house' meetings.

I have also noted the visual and functional improvement plans and activities that have occurred with some of the other neighborhoods in Tacoma (Proctor, McKinley, South End, Eastside). I am also interested in the discussions with setting up a future 'Urban Design Program'. The 'Urban Land Institute' also offers resources and assistance with addressing environmental and Climate-related considerations with planning residential and commercial construction projects in cities

With my discussions with the City Planners, I have shared (also, with written input), the following points that need to be considered with new housing development..especially in South Tacoma neighborhoods:

(1) Lack of 'tree canopy' NOW(10%)...Pre-development..and the loss of trees, lawns, plantlife/green space that occurs with the construction of new apartment buildings

(2) The increased summer 'heat zone' area that will occur in South Tacoma with more buildings, pavement, more people-related activity in over-crowded areas with decreased air circulation. This South Tacoma area already has a well-documented history of hotter summer temperatures as compared with other areas of Tacoma.

(3) People want to be able to use their vehicles for their day-to-day activities of living. Most new apartment buildings are not planned with any or much in the way of off-street parking stalls.

So, more 'on-street' parking is needed by future tenants in already crowded neighborhoods. Residents have been encouraged to rely on use of public transit in these types of neighborhoods. However, the South Tacoma neighborhoods areas are faced with an 'obstacle' that prevents them from the reliable use of public transit to meet their day-to-day transportation needs. The recently approved permit application for the Bridge Industrial Company's (2.5 million sq ft) distribution/fulfillment center...located just 1 mile from the 'Mall Mixed Use sub-area'...will generate 10,000+ additional vehicle trips daily in the South Tacoma area. No study was done with this Bridge Industrial project to evaluate the impacts of this massive increased vehicle trip load on area transit systems. Therefore, no mitigation was included with this Bridge Industrial Company's plans. However, 'common sense' tells us that the system of street routes will be adversely impacted and will affect everyone (local traffic, commuter traffic from University Place, Fircrest and Lakewood..and, bus/transit systems) traveling through South Tacoma for work and shopping.

(4) The cumulative impacts from this massive Bridge Industrial project needs to be included in the decision-making process (and, plans) for adding more housing development in South Tacoma. Is it even ethical to add housing in the 'Mall Mixed Use Sub-Area' without a further study of the cumulative (environmental and

health) impacts of these multiple building projects? Who has oversight of these plans for adding all of this new housing to this area?

At this point, the residents have been told repeatedly that the City Council is "unable" to order a 'Health Impact Assessment'(HIA) for the Bridge Industrial 'mega-warehouse' project.

While the City Council DOES HAVE the legal authority to initiate a 'HIA', they were advised by the City Manager (during the June 27th City Council Meeting...at end of meeting) that a "law would be broken" if a HIA is ordered by the City Council!(??).

(5) Climate Change issues need to be considered with building projects...especially with the increased heat levels in the Country.

People that work or spend alot of time out in the heat.. using public transit.. are at risk of serious adverse impacts on their health. South Tacoma residents already have a documented history of multiple chronic medical diagnoses (Hypertension, Cardiac disease, Respiratory) that could be adversely impacted by increased exposure to high heat levels. The low tree canopy combined with the increased vehicle activity, increased pavement, significantly decreased Green Space area all contribute to increased 'heat zones' in South Tacoma. Please keep in mind....that this massive 'mega-warehouse' building project in South Tacoma will cover over one of the largest Green Spaces in Tacoma.

I am very concerned for the residents of South Tacoma. The frenzy of apartment building construction projects in the 'Mall Mixed Use' area (the area between South Pine and South Tacoma Way..and, between South 38th and South 47th Streets)...is overwhelming this neighborhood area. One housing project involves adding a 60 unit apartment building that only offers 15 parking slots. The tenants of the other apartments in this 60 unit building (possibly 45) will need to find street parking ..if even possible in that area.

Trees, lawns, plants (and, wildlife) are disappearing as apartment buildings are replacing old houses on sites. The designs with these newer buildings do not match...or, blend into the other housing (apartments and houses) in this area. There seems to be no plans to preserve any of the mature trees and plantlife on these sites. And...I certainly have heard of no plans to add a much needed public beautiful park to this South Tacoma neighborhood area.

My question to all of you: what can be done NOW to help out the residents of South Tacoma? We don't have the luxury of time to get "beautiful neighborhoods". By the time any future 'Home in Tacoma' plans are implemented, these South Tacoma neighborhoods will already be in bad shape (unlivable) from all of these building projects. The t South Tacoma neighborhoods continue to be the dumping grounds for ill-conceived building projects. The City of Tacoma needs to do better with project decisions in South Tacoma!

Respectfully,  
Cathie (Raine) Urwin  
5002 S Wapato Street  
Phone #: (253) 431-6689