



PRESENTATION(S)

Meeting on September 20, 2023

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1. Urban Design Project Review Debrief (PowerPoint slides for Discussion Item F1)	3 – 22
2. Public Hearing – Moratorium on Nomination and Designation of Historic Special Review and Conservation Districts (PowerPoint slides for Public Hearing Item G1)	23 – 30



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Urban Design Project Review

Planning Commission Public Hearing Debrief

September 20, 2023

Urban Design Studio
City of Tacoma | Long Range Planning

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comment Summary*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
 - *Thresholds and Departures*
 - *Board Composition*
 - *Code Amendments (Yard/Amenity Space)*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Project Overview⁵

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
 - *Elements*
 - *Thresholds*
 - *Applicable Areas*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*







- Establish an ***Urban Design Project Review*** process
 - Administrative and Urban Design Board review paths
 - Develop ***Manual*** for design review
- Create an ***Urban Design Board***
- Improve ***Design Standards*** in Land Use Code (TMC)

Project Overview⁶

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
 - *Elements*
 - *Thresholds*
 - *Applicable Areas*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

What types of Projects will require Permits?

Location	Exempt from UDPR	UDPR Required	
	TMC standards only	Administrative Review	Board Review
Neighborhood Center	0-10,000 sq. ft. 	10,000 – 40,000 sq. ft. 	40,000 + sq. ft. 
Downtown Tacoma Mall Crossroads Center	0-20,000 sq. ft. 	20,000 – 100,000 sq. ft. 	100,000 + sq. ft. 

Project Overview⁷

Agenda

- ◇ Project Overview
 - Elements
 - Thresholds
 - Applicable Areas
- ◇ Debrief Overview
- ◇ Public Comments
- ◇ Possible Revisions
- ◇ Schedule

Where this Permits would be required

Limited to 16 mapped Mixed Use Centers

- Downtown RGC
- Tacoma Mall RGC
- Crossroads Centers (8)
- Neighborhood Centers (6)

Does NOT apply to Home in Tacoma



Debrief Overview⁸

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

- Review Public Comments from Hearing on August 16, 2023
- Seek direction from the Commission on certain proposal options
- Draft “Planning Commission’s Letter of Recommendations” & “Planning Commission’s Findings of Fact and Recommendations Report” to be presented **October 18, 2023**

Public Comments: Summary of Themes

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Summary of Themes*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Topic	Oral	Written	Total Commenters
Program Impacts on Development	3	7	10
Thresholds and Departures	0	2	2
Guidance and Manual	2	5	7
Tree Canopy	1	3	4
Board Composition	0	5	5
Code Amendments	1	3	4
Effective Dates	1	1	2

Total Public Participants: 19

Number represents per person, not per comment found in the chart, some also commented in more than one category



Public Comments

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Impacts on Development*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Theme

Program Impacts on Development

Summary

- Comments evenly split between supportive/unsupportive
- Support for flexibility and equitable outcomes throughout the city
- Concern over added entitlement time required

Response

- Only largest projects will be subject to Board review
- State law mandated time limit for permit processing
- Program development intentionally included affordable housing developers familiar with similar design review processes

Public Comments

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Thresholds & Departures*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Theme

Thresholds and Departures

Summary

- Comments range widely
- Context should inform level of review
- Disproportionate burden on smaller projects
- Misunderstanding that Board-level review only required for departures
- Particular interest in departures feature

Response

- Thresholds for level of review are calibrated to locational context (i.e., Neighborhood Centers vs. Downtown)
- *Possible proposal revisions to expand and clarify departure provisions*

Public Comments

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Guidance Manual*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Theme

Guidance Manual

Summary

- Generally supportive of the substance of the Manual
- Overall appreciation of “design approaches to consider” for flexible responses
- Some interest in prescriptive “checklist” for compliance
- Interest in support for resilient design and green power features

Response

- Structure and content of Manual support creative design solutions, site-specific conditions and opportunities

Public Comments

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Tree Canopy*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Theme

Tree Canopy

Summary

- Support to preserve and enhance overall canopy

Response

- Draft program values and supports preservation of existing natural features such as trees
- Potential tree conflicts can be addressed through program's early guidance
- *Possible proposal revisions to strengthen departure provisions to more explicitly support tree preservation as a basis for departure considerations*

Public Comments

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Board Composition*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Theme

Board Composition

Summary

- Majority of comments from North End community members, calling for required representation from all City Council districts
- Concern about “white male dominant design culture”

Response

- Board representation is expected to reflect population of high opportunity areas
- *Possible proposal revisions to require minimum level representation citywide*

Public Comments

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Code Amendments*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Theme

Code Amendments

Summary

- Diverse range of comments
- Some misunderstanding of and/or lack of support for current Yard Space Exceptions
- Concern about current Code and proposed amendments' impacts on small and mid-sized projects

Response

- Many building design standards already exempt smaller developments
- *Possible proposal revisions to amenity space requirements for smaller developments and amenity space reduction provisions*
- *Possible proposal revisions to standards eligible for departure*

Public Comments

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
 - *Effective Dates*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Theme

Effective Dates

Summary

- Concern about projects already in design but not vested
- Grace period after adoption to orient and prepare customers

Response

- Staff expect different effective dates for Urban Design Project Review permit and Code Amendment items
- Continue to work with Permit Advisory Group to help guide these timelines and advise outreach and program roll-out

Possible Revisions: Design Departures

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
 - *Design Departures*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Current Draft

Standards eligible for departure review

- Parking development standards (TMC 13.06.090.C, 13.06.090.D, 13.06.090.E)
- Building design standards (TMC 13.06.100)
- Effectively replace existing specific variances

Approval criteria

Demonstrate the proposed alternative design provides equal or superior results to the requirement from which relief is sought in terms of quantity, quality, location, and function.

Possible revisions

- Expand scope of eligible standards
 - Examples*
 - *Prohibition of ground-floor residential uses along designated Pedestrian Streets*
 - *Maximum setbacks*
 - *Amenity space requirements*
 - *Residential transition standards*
- Clarify considerations for approval
 - Ex) Preservation or responsiveness to nature features*

Possible Revisions: Urban Design Board

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
- ◇ ***Possible Revisions***
 - *Urban Design Board*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Current Draft

Seven members

No. of Members	Board Representation
4	Design or development professional
1	Active transportation
1	Sustainable development
1	Culture and heritage

- Min. 2 from Council Districts 3, 4 or 5
- Max. 2 may reside outside of City limits

Possible revisions

- Add requirement that a minimum number of members represent City Council Districts 1 or 2
- Staff also seeks direction regarding the draft residency provision



Possible Revisions: Amenity Space

Agenda

- ◇ *Project Overview*
- ◇ *Debrief Overview*
- ◇ *Public Comments*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
 - *Amenity Space Requirements*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Amenity Space Requirements

Current Draft

Required amenity space

- 50 sq. ft. per unit (no change)
- Common interior amenities now eligible (*aligns with non-X District Multifamily standards*)

Possible revisions

- Tiered requirements
 - Smaller developments (*i.e. <20k sq. ft. site area, ≤ 20 units, etc*) = 25 sq. ft./unit
 - Larger developments (*i.e. 20k+ sq. ft. site area, ≥ 20 units, etc*) = 50 sq. ft./unit

Possible Revisions: Amenity Space

Agenda

- ◇ Project Overview
- ◇ Debrief Overview
- ◇ Public Comments
- ◇ Possible Revisions
 - Amenity Space Reductions
- ◇ Schedule

Amenity Space Reductions

Current Draft

Full Reduction	50% Reduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicability: Only most intense zones • Required: 1/8 mile park proximity, and • Choice: Min. FAR OR mixed-use development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicability: All X zones • Required: 1/4 mile park proximity, and • Choice: Min. FAR OR mixed-use development

Possible revisions

- Develop more specific language to allow certain school yards to qualify for the exception.
Ex) "School Park" or "Community Schoolyard"
- Maintain wider, less-rigorous application of the full reduction for smaller developments (*i.e. <20k sq. ft. site area, ≤ 20 units, etc*).
Ex) Requiring only one of three conditions: Park/school proximity, min. FAR, mixed-use
- Eliminate the exception/reduction provisions entirely.



Schedule

Agenda

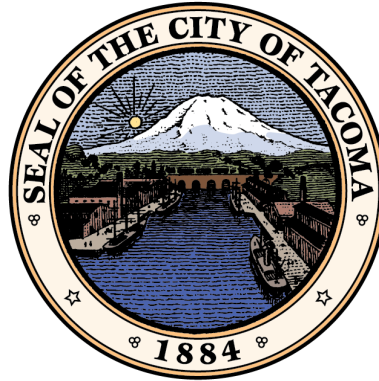
- ◇ *Project Overview*
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- ◇ *Public Comments*
- ◇ *Possible Revisions*
- ◇ *Schedule*

Planning Commission

- October 18, 2023
 - *Commission review of draft proposal and possible revisions*
 - *Recommendation to City Council*

City Council

- January 24, 2024
 - *Begin City Council review process at IPS Committee*
 - *Briefing on Planning Commission recommendation*



PUBLIC HEARING:
**Moratorium on Nomination and Designation of
Historic Special Review and Conservation Districts**

Planning Commission
City of Tacoma | Planning and Development Services
September 20, 2023



Overview



Council Resolution 41226:

The Planning Commission, in coordination with the Landmarks Preservation Commission, [is requested to] conduct a **public process** to develop findings of fact and recommendations as to **whether a moratorium** on nomination and designation of Historic Special Review and Conservation Districts **is warranted**, and if so, to recommend the **scope and duration**.

Overview



Purpose:

To receive public comment on potential moratorium.

Key questions for consideration:

1. Is a moratorium on local historic district consideration warranted?
2. If so, what is the appropriate scope and timeline?
3. Are there additional studies or research necessary to identify a solution for permanent code/policy changes?

Overview



Key Points:

1. Potential moratorium only applies to future locally designated historic districts
2. A moratorium is temporary, 6 – 8 months in duration
3. National Register and Washington Heritage Register District creation is outside the scope of this proposal
4. Planning Commission is advisory to Council; Council resolution required to enact moratorium



Overview



About Local Historic Districts:

- City of Tacoma has 4 local historic district overlay zones and 2 conservation district overlay zones

Local historic district name	Year Established	# of Buildings
Old City Hall Historic District	1978	45
Union Depot-Warehouse Historic District	1983	37
North Slope Historic District	1994 (expanded in 1996 and 1999)	~944
Wedge Neighborhood Historic District	2011	67

- Local historic districts require design review for most exterior alterations by Landmarks Commission



Overview

TMC 13.05.030.E Moratoria and Interim Zoning:

1. City Council-initiated moratoria or interim zoning shall be referred to the Planning Commission for findings of fact and a recommendation prior to action.
2. The Planning Commission shall address duration and scope and note if a study, either underway or proposed, is expected to develop a permanent solution and the time period by which that study would be concluded.
3. Moratoria or interim zoning may be effective for a period of not longer than six months but may be effective for up to one year if a work plan is developed for related studies requiring such longer period.

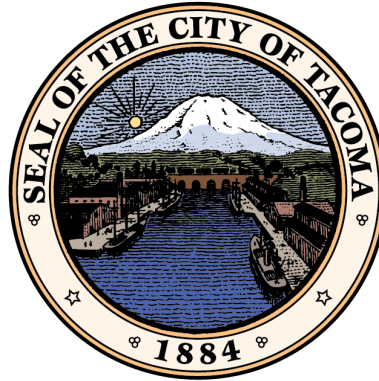


Overview



Review schedule :

DATE	FORUM	SUBJECT
Sept 20	Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public hearing on moratorium
October 4	Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Debrief on hearing testimony ● Summary of issues ● Identify key questions for LPC input
October 11	Landmarks Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review testimony ● Adopt response to Planning Commission
November 15	Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LPC feedback presented to Planning Commission ● Finalize recommendations to Council
TBD	Council Study Session	
Jan-Feb 2024 - TBD	City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resolution on moratorium (TBD)



PUBLIC HEARING:
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