



Public Comments

Meeting: Wednesday, June 21, 2023

Submittal: Written comments received at planning@cityoftacoma.org
by 12:00 noon on the meeting day

Subjects: Comments are addressing the following Discussion Item(s) on the agenda:

**F1 – South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District (STGPD) Code
Amendment**

**No. of
Comments:** Two



From: [Barbara Church](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Cc: [Barbara Church](#)
Subject: STGPD
Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 11:23:03 AM

As we are currently seeing, our groundwaters are critical. Arizona has areas where their water sources are depleted. This circumstance is growing in other states as well. It's important to look to the future to preserve and protect the natural resources that we have. The South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District (STGPD) and its current zoning overlay has not been thoroughly updated since 2006 or 2007.

We have all experienced the differences in the climate these past 17 years with heat domes, fire storms and more. Please consider how those changes have affected the aquifer since 2006 and what future repercussions will be. How will those changes affect the recharge rate and water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?

With the Mt. Rainier glaciers melting/decreasing, the availability of water in the Green River will also decline. Please consider how climate change and population growth will impact the availability of water in the Green River.

This update is long overdue. Current industry being permitted already threatens our aquifer and consequently threatens the water source for all Tacoma residents.

Respectfully, Barbara Church, NE Tacoma resident

From: [Tim Smith](#)
To: [Planning; Atkinson, Stephen](#)
Cc: [Heidi S.; stacyoaks425@gmail.com; Michelle Mood; Janeen Provazek; Barbara Church; cirrd@hotmail.com; melyn50@gmail.com](#)
Subject: Comments for Agenda Item F1 STGPD..Planning Commission Meeting (6/21/23))
Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 8:38:51 AM
Attachments: [Outlook-aii3o2mv.png](#)
[Outlook-2eraxz14.png](#)
[Outlook-inb3twln.png](#)
[PC Restart of STGPD Comments 21 JUN 23.docx](#)
Importance: High

Stephen,

Please include these comments for record regarding the SAB.

Vr,

Tim Smith
South Tacoma

To the City of Tacoma Planning Commission

The South Tacoma Aquifer is threatened by systemic apathy, misinformation, ill-informed and rapid development approval processes, and lack of current best science sources. 2 years ago, the residents recognized this and put forward an amendment thru the normal legislative process. This update should be done by now. The Council directed this to move forward last year and yet little has been done. The South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District (STGPD) and its current zoning overlay are in serious need of updating to reflect modern-day knowledge for better proactive action, instead of simply reacting to post-contamination which continues to occur.

We proposed progressional changes to the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Designation and Regulator Code for South Tacoma, to promote a Green Manufacturing Area more consistent with Tacoma's economic and environmental goals, as well as leveraging existing possibilities of undeveloped sites within the STGPD and aquifer recharge areas, to avoid further environmental contamination and negative health impacts, while also bringing additional economic opportunities and revitalization.

The time is well-past for developing a present-day, best science approach to enable Eco-Industry and "New Business Incubation" while precluding hazards resulting in costly clean-up. We propose modifications transitioning away from harmful polluting industry, instead toward promoting a Green Manufacturing Zone more consistent with Tacoma's economic and environmental goals. The update of the STGPD and development of a "Green Economic Zone" were and are in line with the recently passed Green Economic Strategy.

Our intent is a broad review to align the Comprehensive Plan, the Urban Tree Canopy, Tacoma Environmental Act, Climate Justice Action Plan and Groundwater District Protection Code into a new unified Eco-Industrial Green Zone.

The STGPD must remain a stand-alone part of the code and remain the OVERLAY with all other zoning and land use subordinate.
80% of the existing code is functional and protective, however punitive measures

must be enhanced and a "palette" of incentives should be developed to aid in the planning and siting of "Green" activities, tree cover, and health impact mitigations. Environmental Justice and Equity should be used on all zone and land use decisions. Community notice and involvement should be enhanced.

Incorporation of impervious surface limitations must be incorporated using locally available standards such as exist within Pierce County already.

Outside responsible organizations MUST be included like EPA Region 10, WA Dept of Ecology, DFWS, and TPCHD ~ and members from 2016 review.

A major analysis of the aquifer must be conducted. The following questions must be a part of that study as we do not have the best available science required as part of a review.

AQUIFER Unknowns

- 1) What is the current groundwater recharge rate of the South Tacoma Aquifer through the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District? Note that this is a very different question than asking about the current groundwater recharge rate through the entire catchment area of the South Tacoma Aquifer, which appears to be reasonably well-known.
- 2) What would be the rate of replenishment of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District if the groundwater recharge through the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District were significantly restricted?
- 3) What is the functional dependence of the groundwater recharge rate of the South Tacoma Aquifer through the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District on the quantity of impervious surface within the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?
- 4) What is the functional dependence of the water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District on the quantity of impervious surface within the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?
- 5) What will be the impact of climate change on the recharge rate and water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?
- 6) What will be the combined impacts of climate change and an increase in the quantity of impervious surface in the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District on the recharge rate and water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?
- 7) What will be the impact of population growth on the recharge rate and water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?
- 8) What will be the combined impacts of population growth, climate change, and an increase in the quantity of impervious surface in the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District on the recharge rate and water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?
- 9) How will climate change and population growth affect the availability of water in the Green River?
- 10) How will a change in the availability of water in the Green River affect the demand for groundwater from the South Tacoma Aquifer?
- 11) What will be the combined impacts of a decrease in the availability of water from the Green River, population growth, climate change, and an increase in the quantity of impervious surface in the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District on the recharge rate and water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?

12) How will changes in the groundwater recharge rate or the water table of the South Tacoma Aquifer affect the water quality of the South Tacoma Aquifer beneath the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District?

