

# Determination of Significance Notice of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Public Scoping and Public Scoping Meeting

## Tideflats Subarea Plan and Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement

SEPA File Number: LU22-0124

**Proponent:** City of Tacoma (City)

**Project Name:** Tacoma Tideflats Subarea Plan and Planned Action EIS

**Funding:** The Subarea Plan and EIS are jointly funded by the City of Tacoma, Port of Tacoma, and Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

**Description of the Proposal:** The proposed project involves development of an innovative, area-wide subarea plan for Tacoma's Tideflats, which will become an optional element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The subarea plan is expected to include elements related to land use, economic development, the environment, public facilities and services, and transportation. The subarea plan is being developed for consistency with the Growth Management Act, Shoreline Management Act, multicounty planning policies, countywide planning policies, and the City of Tacoma Comprehensive Plan.

**Planned Action Environmental Review:** A planned action environmental review involves detailed State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review and preparation of EIS documents in conjunction with sub-area plans, consistent with [RCW 43.21C.031](#), [RCW 43.21C.440](#), and [WAC 197-11-164](#) through [WAC 197-11-172](#). Completing a non-project EIS presents a cumulative impact analysis for the entire subarea, rather than piecemeal analysis of the environmental impacts and mitigation on a project-by-project basis. As a result, the environmental impacts and mitigation are comprehensively evaluated at the subarea-wide level. Such up-front analysis of impacts and mitigation measures then facilitates environmental review of subsequent individual development projects. The City would not make a threshold determination and may not require additional environmental review, for a future development proposal that is determined to be consistent with the planned action ordinance. This will provide certainty and predictability for both development proposals and the community, streamline the environmental review process within the subarea, and encouraging the goals of SEPA<sup>1</sup> and the State's Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW). Community members, agencies, and tribes are encouraged to participate and provide comment during this planned action environmental review effort while the evaluation is under preparation since it will guide future development proposals and future threshold determinations would be limited.

**Location:** The Plan area is based on the current Port of Tacoma Manufacturing Industrial Center (MIC) which is defined both in the Puget Sound Regional Council VISION 2040 as well as the City of Tacoma Comprehensive Plan. However, studies and recommendations from the Plan process will likely extend beyond this Plan area, including the lands immediately adjacent to the MIC and depending on the topic under review (air and water quality, traffic impacts, freight corridors, land use transitions, economic

<sup>1</sup> SEPA is the State Environmental Policy Act (Chapter 43.21C RCW). Regulations that implement SEPA are called the SEPA Rules (Chapter 197-11 WAC).



impacts and strategies, etc.). The City of Tacoma intends to designate this Tacoma Tideflats Subarea as a planned action under the provisions of RCW43.21C.440.

**Lead Agency:** The City of Tacoma is lead agency for SEPA compliance.

**Environmental Impact Statement Required:** The City of Tacoma has determined that the Tacoma Tideflats Subarea Plan is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact. An EIS under RCW 43.21C.030(2) (c) will be prepared. This decision was made after review of information on-file with the City. Preliminary indications are that the following environmental parameters will be evaluated in this EIS:

- Air Quality
- Stormwater and Water Quality
- Plants and Animals
- Land and Shoreline Use/Plans and Policies
- Population, Employment, and Housing
- Cultural Resources
- Transportation
- Public Utilities
- Public Services

**Alternatives:** It is proposed that the EIS analyze several alternatives as part of the Tacoma Tideflats Subarea Plan. The Alternatives include a No Action Alternative and three Action Alternatives. It is anticipated that the alternatives will be based on variations of elements such as the mix of industrial zoning and land uses, employment growth scenarios, transition areas, housing types and location, sea level rise adaptation strategies, fish and wildlife habitat restoration, and shoreline public access and recreation.

For purposes of the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that development would occur within the Tacoma Tideflats Subarea based on existing zoning and development standards. Development or redevelopment that is proposed within the Tacoma Tideflats Subarea in conjunction with the No Action Alternative would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis. Such projects would be subject to site-specific mitigation and potential SEPA-based appeals.

The alternatives are described in more detail on the project webpage found at [www.cityoftacoma.org/tideflatsplan](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/tideflatsplan).

**EIS Scoping:** Agencies, affected tribes and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of this proposed EIS. You may comment on the alternatives, probable significant adverse impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. Methods for presenting your comments are described below. The expanded scoping process is being provided pursuant to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-410 and will include one public scoping meeting. Due to continued precautions for COVID-19, this meeting will be held virtually.

Please note that the City of Tacoma does not discriminate on the basis of disability in any of its programs, activities, or services. To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 253-591-5505. TTY or speech-to-speech users, please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Services.



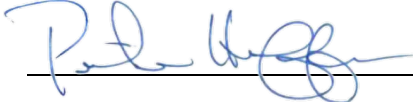
**Comment Deadline:** All comments are due no later than 5:00 pm on Friday, August 5, 2022, Pacific Standard Time (PST).

**Methods to Provide Comments:**

- **Written comments may be submitted:**  
Online at [www.cityoftacoma.org/tideflatsplan](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/tideflatsplan).  
By mail to:  
Attn: Stephen Atkinson, Principal Planner, Long Range Planning Division  
City of Tacoma, Planning and Development Services  
747 Market Street, Room 349  
Tacoma, WA 98402
- **Virtual EIS Public Scoping Meeting – An EIS Scoping meeting is scheduled from 6:00-8:30 pm PST, Wednesday, July 13, 2022.** The purpose of the meeting is to present information about the proposed Subarea Plan and Planned Action, the SEPA process, and to provide a verbal comment opportunity on the scope of the proposed EIS. To participate in the scoping meeting attendees are requested to register in advance and may sign up to provide an official scoping comment using the following meeting link: [bit.ly/tideflatsmtg](http://bit.ly/tideflatsmtg). Attendees who do not sign up to provide a scoping comment in advance may still make a verbal scoping comment at the meeting. A court reporter will be in attendance to transcribe comments.

Project-related information can be reviewed on the project website at:  
[www.cityoftacoma.org/tideflatsplan](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/tideflatsplan).

Responsible Official: Peter Huffman  
Position/Title: Director, Planning and Development Services Department

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue Date:** June 21, 2022  
**Comment Deadline:** August 5, 2022

